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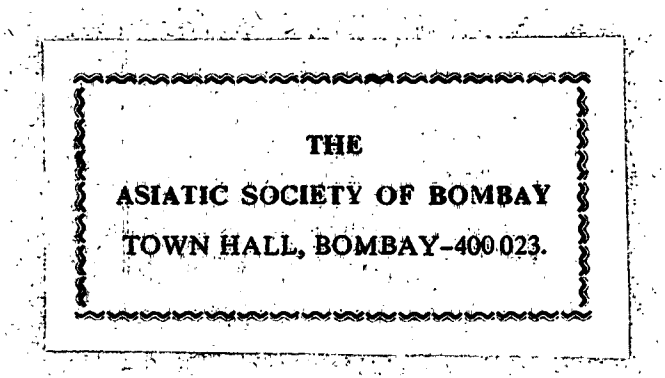

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WITH SKETCHES OF

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

VOL. II.

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WITH SKETCHES OF

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SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "VATHEK."

William Beckford

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PORTUGAL.

PREFACE

TO

PORTUGUESE LETTERS.

PORTUGAL attracting much attention in her present convulsed and declining state, it might not perhaps be uninteresting to the public to cast back a glance by way of contrast to the happier times when she enjoyed under the mild and beneficent reign of Donna Maria the First, a great share of courtly and commercial prosperity.

March 1, 1834.

PORTUGAL.

LETTER I.

Detained at Falmouth.—Navigation at a stop.—An evening ramble.

Falmouth, March6, 1787.

THE glass is sinking; the west wind gently breathing upon the water, the smoke softly descending into the room, and sailors yawning dismally at the door of every ale-house.

Navigation seems at a full stop. The captains lounging about with their hands in their pockets, and passengers idling at billiards. Dr. V—— has scraped acquaintance with a quaker, and went last night to one of their assemblies, where he kept jingling his fine Genevan watch-chains to their sober and silent dismay.

In the intervals of the mild showers with which we are blessed, I ramble about some

fields already springing with fresh herbage, which slope down to the harbour: the immediate environs of Falmouth are not unpleasant upon better acquaintance. Just out of the town, in a sheltered recess of the bay, lies a grove of tall elms, forming several avenues carpeted with turf. In the central point rises a stone pyramid about thirty feet high, well designed and constructed, but quite plain without any inscription; between the stems of the trees one discovers a low white house, built in and out in a very capricious manner, with oriel windows and porches, shaded by bushes of prosperous bay. Several rose-coloured cabbages, with leaves as crisped and curled as those of the acanthus, decorate a little grass-plat, neatly swept, before the door. Over the roof of this snug habitation I spied the skeleton of a gothic mansion, so completely robed with thick ivy, as to appear like one of those castles of clipped box I have often seen in a Dutch garden.

Yesterday evening, the winds being still, and the sun gleaming warm for a moment or two, I visited this spot to examine the ruin, hear birds chirp, and scent wall-flowers.

Two young girls, beautifully shaped, and dressed with a sort of romantic provincial elegance, were walking up and down the grove by the pyramid. There was something so love-lorn in their gestures, that I have no doubt they were sighing out their souls to each other. As a decided amateur of this sort of *confidential promenade*, I would have given my ears to have heard their *confessions*.

LETTER II.

Mines in the parish of Gwynnap.—Piety and gin.—Rapid progress of Methodism.—Freaks of fortune.—Pernicious extravagance.—Minerals.—Mr. Beauchamp's mansion.—Beautiful lake.—The wind still contrary.

Falmouth, March 7, 1787.

SCOTT came this morning and took me to see the consolidated mines in the parish of Gwynnap; they are situated in a bleak desert, rendered still more doleful by the unhealthy appearance of its inhabitants. At every step one stumbles upon ladders that lead into utter darkness, or funnels that exhale warm copperous vapours. All around these openings the ore is piled up in heaps waiting for purchasers. I saw it drawn reeking out of the mine by the help of a machine called a whim, put in motion by mules, which in their turn are stimulated by impish children hanging over the poor brutes, and flogging them round without respite. This dismal scene of *whims*, suffering mules, and

hillocks of cinders, extends for miles. Huge iron engines creaking and groaning, invented by Watt, and tall chimneys smoking and flaming, that seem to belong to old Nicholas's abode, diversify the prospect.

Two strange-looking Cornish beings, dressed in ghostly white, conducted me about, and very kindly proposed a descent into the bowels of the earth, but I declined initiation. These mystagogues occupy a tolerable house, with fair sash windows, where the inspectors of the mine hold their meetings, and regale upon beef, pudding, and brandy.

While I was standing at the door of this habitation, several woful figures in tattered garments, with pickaxes on their shoulders, crawled out of a dark fissure and repaired to a hovel, which I learnt was a gin-shop. There they pass the few hours allotted them above ground, and drink, it is to be hoped, an oblivion of their subterraneous existence. Piety as well as gin helps to fill up their leisure moments, and I was told that Wesley, who came apostolising into Cornwall a few years ago, preached on this very spot to above seven thousand followers.

Since this period Methodism has made a very rapid progress, and has been of no trifling service in diverting the attention of these sons of darkness from their present condition to the glories of the life to come. However, some people inform me their actual state is not so much to be lamented, and that, notwithstanding their pale looks and tattered raiment, they are far from being poor or unhealthy. Fortune often throws a considerable sum into their laps, when they least expect it, and many a common miner has been known to gain a hundred pounds in the space of a month or two. Like sailors in the first effusion of prize-money, they have no notion of turning their good-luck to advantage; but squander the fruits of their toil in the silliest species of extravagance. Their wives are dressed out in tawdry silks, and flaunt away in ale-houses between rows of obedient fiddlers. The money spent, down they sink again into damps and darkness.

Having passed about an hour in collecting minerals, stopping engines with my finger, and performing all the functions of a diligent young man desirous of information, I turned

my back on smokes, flames, and coal-holes, with great pleasure.

Not above a mile-and-a-half from this black bustling scene, in a sheltered valley, lies the mansion of Mr. Beauchamp, wrapped up in shrubberies of laurel and laurustine. Copses of hazel and holly terminate the prospect on almost every side, and in the midst of the glen a broad clear stream reflects the impending vegetation. This transparent water, after performing the part of a mirror before the house, forms a succession of waterfalls which glitter between slopes of the smoothest turf, sprinkled with daffodils: numerous flights of widgeon and Muscovy ducks, were sprucing themselves on the edge of the stream, and two grave swans seemed highly to approve of its woody retired banks for the education of their progeny.

Very glad was I to disport on its "margent green," after crushing cinders at every step all the morning; had not the sun hid himself, and the air grown chill, I might have fooled away three or four hours with the swans and the widgeons, and lost my dinner. Upon my return home, I found the wind as contrary as ever, and all thoughts of sailing abandoned.

LETTER III.

A lovely morning.—Antiquated mansion.—Its lady.—Ancestral effigies.—Collection of animals.—Serene evening.—Owls.—Expected dreams.

Falmouth, March 8, 1787.

WHAT a lovely morning! how glassy the sea, how busy the fishing-boats, and how fast asleep the wind in its old quarter! Towards evening, however, it freshened, and I took a toss in a boat with Mr. Trefusis, whose territories extend half round the bay. His green hanging downs spotted with sheep, and intersected by rocky gullies, shaded by tall straight oaks and ashes, form a romantic prospect, very much in the style of Mount Edgcumbe.

We drank tea at the capital of these dominions, an antiquated mansion, which is placed in a hollow on the summit of a lofty hill, and contains many ruinous halls and never-ending passages: they cannot, however, be said

to lead to nothing, like those celebrated by Gray in his Long Story, for Mrs. Trefusis terminated the perspective. She is a native of Lausanne, and was quite happy to see her countryman Verdeil.

We should have very much enjoyed her conversation, but the moment tea was over, the squire could not resist leading us round his improvements in kennel, stable, and ox-stall: though it was pitch-dark, and we were obliged to be escorted by grooms and groom-lings with candles and lanterns; a very neces-sary precaution, as the winds blew not more violently without the house than within.

In the course of our peregrination through halls, pantries, and antechambers, we passed a staircase with heavy walnut-railing, lined from top to bottom with effigies of ancestors that looked quite formidable by the horny glow of our lanterns; which illumination, dull as it was, occasioned much alarm amongst a collection of animals, both furred and fea-thered, the delight of Mr. Trefusis's existence.

Every corner of his house contains some strange and stinking inhabitant; one can hardly move without stumbling over a basket of

puppies, or rolling along a mealy tub, with ferrets in the bottom of it; rap went my head against a wire cage, and behold a squirrel twirled out of its sleep in sad confusion: a little further on, I was very near being the destruction of some new-born dormice—their feeble squeak haunts my ears at this moment!

Beyond this nursery, a door opened and admitted us into a large saloon, in the days of Mr. Trefusis's father very splendidly decorated, but at present exhibiting nothing, save damp plastered walls, mouldering floors, and cracked windows. A well-known perfume issuing from this apartment, proclaimed the neighbourhood of those fragrant animals, which you perfectly recollect were the joy of my infancy, and presently three or four couple of spanking yellow rabbits made their appearance. A racoon poked his head out of a coop, whilst an owl lifted up the gloom of his countenance, and gave us his malediction.

My nose having lost all relish for *rabbitish* odours, took refuge in my handkerchief; there did I keep it snug till it pleased our conductors to light us through two or three closets, all of a flutter with Virginia nightingales, goldfinches,

and canary-birds, into the stable. Several game-cocks fell a crowing with most triumphant shrillness upon our approach; and a monkey—the image of poor Brandoin—expanded his jaws in so woful a manner, that I grew melancholy, and paid the hunters not half the attention they merited.

At length we got into the open air again, made our bows and departed. The evening was become serene and pleasant, the moon beamed brilliantly on the sea; but the owls, who are never to be pleased, hooted most ruefully.

Good night: I expect to dream of *closed-up doors,** and haunted passages; rats, puppies, racoons, game-cocks, rabbits, and dormice.

* See Miss Williams's poems.

LETTER IV.

A blustering night.—Tedium of the language of the compass.—Another excursion to Trefusis.

Falmouth, March 10, 1787.

I THOUGHT last night our thin pasteboard habitation would have been blown into the sea, for never in my life did I hear such dreadful blusterings. Perhaps the winds are celebrating the approach of the equinox, or some high festival in Æolus's calendar, with which we poor mortals are unacquainted. How tired I am of the language of the compass, of wind shifting to this point and veering to the other; of gales springing up, and breezes freshening; of rough seas, clear berths, ships driving, and anchors lifting. Oh! that I was rooted like a tree, in some sheltered corner of an inland valley, where I might never hear more of salt-water or sailing.

You cannot wonder at my becoming impa-

tient, after eleven days' captivity, nor at my wishing myself anywhere but where I am: I should almost prefer a quarantine party at the new elegant Lazaretto off Marseilles, to this smoky residence; at least, I might there learn some curious particulars of the Levant, enjoy bright sunshine, and perfect myself in Arabic. But what can a being of my turn do at Falmouth? I have little taste for the explanation of fire-engines, Mr. Scott; the pursuit of hares under the auspices of young Trefusis; or the gliding of billiard-balls in the society of Barbadoes Creoles and packet-boat captains. The Lord have mercy upon me! now, indeed, do I perform penance.

Our dinner yesterday went off tolerably well. We had *on* the table a savoury pig, right worthy of Otaheite, and some of the finest poultry I ever tasted; and *round* the table two or three brace of odd Cornish gentlefolks, not deficient in humour and originality.

About eight in the evening, six game-cocks were ushered into the eating-room by two limber lads in scarlet jackets; and, after a flourish of crowing, the noble birds set to with surprising keenness. Tufts of brilliant fea-

thers soon flew about the apartment; but the carpet was not stained with the blood of the combatants: for, to do Trefusis justice, he has a generous heart, and takes no pleasure in cruelty. The cocks were unarmed, had their spurs cut short, and may live to fight fifty such harmless battles.

LETTER V.

Regrets produced by Contrasts.

Falmouth, March 11, 1787.

WHAT a fool was I to leave my beloved retirement at Evian! Instead of viewing innumerable transparent rills falling over the amber-coloured rocks of Melierie, I am chained down to contemplate an oozy beach, deserted by the sea, and becrawled with worms tracking their way in the slime that harbours them. Instead of the cheerful crackling of a wood-fire in the old baron's great hall, I hear the bellowing of winds in narrow chimneys. You must allow the aromatic fragrance of fir-cones, such heaps of which I used to burn in Savoy, is greatly preferable to the exhalations of Welsh coal, and that to a person wrapped up in musical devotion, high mass must be a good deal superior to the hummings and hawings of a Quaker assembly. Colett swears

he had rather be boarded at the Inquisition than remain at the mercy of the confounded keeper of this hotel, the worst and the dearest in Christendom. We are all tired to death, and know not what to do with ourselves.

As I look upon ennui to be very catching, I shall break off before I give you a share of it.

LETTER VI.

Still no prospect of embarkation.—Pen-dennis Castle.—Luxuriant vegetation.—A serene day.—Anticipations of the voyage.

Falmouth, March 13, 1787.

No prospect of launching this day upon the ocean. Every breeze is subsided, and a profound calm established. I walk up and down the path which leads to Pen-dennis Castle with folded arms, in a most listless desponding mood. Vast brakes of furze, much stouter and loftier than any with which I am acquainted, scent the air with the perfume of apricots. Primroses, violets, and fresh herbs innumerable expand on every bank. Larks, poised in the soft blue sky, warble delightfully. The sea, far and wide, is covered with fishing-boats; and such a stillness prevails, that I hear the voices of the fishermen.

You will be rambling in sheltered alleys, whilst winds and currents drive me furiously

along craggy shores, under the scowl of a tempestuous sky. You will be angling for perch, whilst sharks are whetting their teeth at me. Methinks I hear the voracious gluttons disputing the first snap, and pointing upwards their cold slimy noses. Out upon them! I have no desire to invade their element, or (using poetical language) to plough those plains of waves which brings them rich harvests of carcasses, and had much rather cling fast to the green banks of Pen-dennis. I even prefer mining to sailing; and of the two, had rather be swallowed up by the earth than the ocean.

I wish some "swart fairy of the mine" would snatch me to her concealments. Rather than pass a month in the qualms of sea-sickness, I would consent to live three by candlelight, in the deepest den you could discover, stuck close to a foul midnight hag as mouldy as a rotten apl e.

This, you will tell me, is being very energetic in my aversions, that I allow; but such, you know, is my trim, and I cannot help it.

LETTER VII.

Portugal.—Excursion to Pagliavam.—The villa.—Dismal labyrinths in the Dutch style. — Roses.—Anglo-Portuguese Master of the Horse.—Interior of the Palace.—Furniture in petticoats.—Force of education.—Royalty without power.—Return from the Palace.

30th May, 1787.

HORNE persuaded me much against my will to accompany him in his Portuguese chaise to Pagliavam, the residence of John the Fifth's bastards, instead of following my usual track along the sea-shore. The roads to this stately garden are abominable, and more infested by beggars, dogs, flies, and musquitoes, than any I am acquainted with. The villa itself, which belongs to the Marquis of Lourical, is placed in a hollow, and the tufted groves which surround it admit not a breath of air; so I was half suffocated the moment I entered their shade.

A great flat space before the garden-front

of the villa is laid out in dismal labyrinths of clipped myrtle, with lofty pyramids rising from them, in the style of that vile Dutch maze planted by King William at Kensington, and rooted up some years ago by King George the Third. Beyond this puzzling ground are several long alleys of stiff dark verdure, called *ruas*, *i. e.* literally streets, with great propriety, being more close, more formal, and not less dusty than High-Holborn. I deviated from them into plats of well-watered vegetables and aromatic herbs, enclosed by neat fences of cane, covered with an embroidery of the freshest and most perfect roses, quite free from insects and cankers, worthy to have strewn the couches and graced the bosom of Lais, Aspasia, or Lady ——. You know how warmly every mortal of taste delights in these lovely flowers; how frequently, and in what harmonious numbers, Ariosto has celebrated them. Has not Lady —— a whole apartment painted over with roses? Does she not fill her bath with their leaves, and deck her idols with garlands of no other flowers? and is she not quite in the right of it?

Whilst I was poetically engaged with the

roses, Horne entered into conversation with a sort of Anglo-Portuguese Master of the Horse to their bastard highnesses. He had a snug well-powdered wig, a bright silver-hilted sword, a crimson full-dress suit, and a gently bulging paunch. With one hand in his bosom and the other in the act of taking snuff, he harangued emphatically upon the holiness, temperance, and chastity of his august masters, who live sequestered from the world in dingy silent state, abhor profane company, and never cast a look upon females.

Being curious to see the abode of these semi-royal sober personages, I entered the palace. Not an insect stirred, not a whisper was audible. The principal apartments consist in a suite of lofty-coved saloons, nobly proportioned, and uniformly hung with damask of the deepest crimson. The upper end of each room is doubly shaded by a ponderous canopy of cut velvet. To the right and left appear rows of huge elbow-chairs of the same materials. No glasses, no pictures, no gilding, no decoration, but heavy drapery; even the tables are concealed by cut velvet flounces, in the style of those with which our dowagers used

formerly to array their toilets. The very sight of such close tables is enough to make one perspire; and I cannot imagine what demon prompted the Portuguese to invent such a fusty fashion.

This taste for putting commodes and tables into petticoats is pretty general here, at least in royal apartments. At Queluz, not a card or dining-table has escaped; and many an old court-dress, I should suspect, has been cut up to furnish these accoutrements, which are of all colours, plain and flowered, pastorally sprigged or gorgeously embroidered. Not so at Pagliavam. Crimson alone prevails, and casts its royal gloom unrivalled on every object. Stuck fast to the wall, between two of the aforementioned tables, are two fauteuils for their highnesses; and opposite, a rank of chairs for those reverend fathers in God who from time to time are honoured with admittance.

How mighty is the force of Education!—What pains it must require on the part of nurses, equerries, and chamberlains, to stifle every lively and generous sensation in the princelings they educate,—to break a human being into the habits of impotent royalty!

Dignity without command is one of the heaviest of burthens. A sovereign may employ himself; he has the choice of good or evil; but princes, like those of Pagliavam, without power or influence, who have nothing to feed on but imaginary greatness, must yawn their souls out, and become in process of time as formal and inanimate as the pyramids of stunted myrtle in their gardens. Happier were those babies King John did not think proper to recognize, and they are not few in number, for that pious monarch,

"Wide as his command,
"Scattered his Maker's image through the land."

They, perhaps, whilst their brothers are gaping under rusty canopies, tinkle their guitars in careless moonlight rambles, wriggle in gay fandangos, or enjoy sound sleep, rural fare, and merriment, in the character of jolly village curates.

I was glad to get out of the palace; its stillness and gloom depressed my spirits, and a confined atmosphere, impregnated with the smell of burnt lavender, almost overcame me. I am just returned gasping for air. No wonder; one might as well be in bed with a warming-pan as

in a Portuguese cariole with the portly Horne, who carries a noble protuberance, set off in this season with a satin waistcoat richly spangled.

I must go to Cintra, or I shall expire!

LETTER VIII.

Glare of the climate in Portugal. — Apish luxury. — Botanic Gardens.—Açafatas.—Description of the Gardens and Terraces.

May 31, 1787.

It is in vain I call upon clouds to cover me and fogs to wrap me up. You can form no adequate idea of the continual glare of this renowned climate. Lisbon is the place in the world best calculated to make one cry out

"Hide me from day's garish eye;"

but where to hide is not so easy. Here are no thickets of pine as in the classic Italian villas, none of those quivering poplars and leafy chesnuts which cover the plains of Lombardy. The groves in the immediate environs of this capital are composed of—with, alas! but few exceptions—dwarfish orange-trees and cinder-coloured olives. Under their branches repose neither shepherds nor shepherdesses, but whitening

bones, scraps of leather, broken pantiles, and passengers not unfrequently attended by monkeys, who, I have been told, are let out for the purpose of picking up a livelihood. Those who cannot afford this apish luxury, have their bushy poles untenanted by affectionate relations, for yesterday just under my window I saw two blessed babies rendering this good office to their aged parent.

I had determined not to have stirred beyond the shade of my awning; however, towards eve, the extreme fervour of the sun being a little abated, old Horne (who has yet a colt's-tooth) prevailed upon me to walk in the Botanic Gardens, where not unfrequently are to be found certain youthful animals of the female gender called Açafatas, in Portuguese; a species between a bedchamber woman and a maid of honour. The Queen has kindly taken the ugliest with her to the Caldas: those who remain have large black eyes sparkling with the true spirit of adventure, an exuberant flow of dark hair, and pouting lips of the colour and size of full-blown roses.

All this, you will tell me, does not compose a perfect beauty. I never meant to convey such

a notion: I only wish you to understand that the nymphs we have just quitted are the flowers of the Queen's flock, and that she has, at least, four or five dozen more in attendance upon her sacred person, with larger mouths, smaller eyes, and swarthier complexions.

Not being in sufficient spirits to flourish away in Portuguese, my conversation was chiefly addressed to a lovely blue-eyed Irish girl of fifteen or sixteen, lately married to an officer of her Majesty's customs. Spouse goes a pilgrimaging to Nossa Senhora do Cabo—little madam whisks about the Botanic Garden with the ladies of the palace and a troop of sopranos, who teach her to warble and speak Italian. She is well worth teaching everything in their power. Her hair of the loveliest auburn, her straight Grecian eyebrows and fair complexion, form a striking contrast to the gipsy-coloured skins and jetty tresses of her companions. She looked like a visionary being skimming along the alleys, and leaving the pot-bellied sopranos and dowdy Açafatas far behind, wondering at her agility.

The garden is pleasant enough, situated upon an eminence, planted with light flower-

ing trees clustered with blossoms. Above their topmost branches rises a broad majestic terrace, with marble balustrades of shining whiteness and strange Oriental pattern. They design indifferently in this country, but execute with great neatness and precision. I never saw balustrades better hewn or chiseled than those bordering the steps which lead up to the grand terrace. Its ample surface is laid out in oblong compartments of marble, containing no very great variety of heliotropes, aloes, geraniums, china-roses, and the commonest plants of our green-houses. Such ponderous divisions have a dismal effect; they reminded one of a place of interment, and it struck me as if the deceased inhabitants of the adjoining palace were sprouting up in the shape of prickly-pears, Indian-figs, gaudy holly-oaks, and peppery capsicums.

The terrace is about fifteen hundred paces in length. Three copious fountains give it an air of coolness, much increased by the waving of tall acacias, exposed by their lofty situation to every breeze which blows from the entrance of the Tagus, whose lovely azure appears to great advantage between the quivering foliage.

The Irish girl and your faithful correspondent coursed each other like children along the terrace, and when tired reposed under a group of gigantic Brazilian aloes by one of the fountains. The swarthy party detached its principal guardian, a gawky young priest, to observe all the wanderings and riposos of us white people.

It was late, and the sun had set several minutes before I took my departure. Black eyes and blue eyes seem horridly jealous of each other. I fear my youthful and lively companion will suffer for having more alertness than the Açafatas: she will be pinched, if I am not mistaken, as the party return through the dark and intricate passages which join the palace of the Ajuda to the gardens. Sad thought, the leaving such a fair little being in the hands of fiery, despotic females, so greatly her inferiors in complexion and delicacy.

They will take especial care, I warrant them, to fill the husband's head with suspicions less charitable than those inspired by Nossa Senhora do Cabo.

LETTER IX.

Consecration of the Bishop of Algarve.—Pathetic Music.—Valley of Alcantara.—Enormous Aqueduct.—Visit to the Marialva Palace.—Its much revered Masters.—Collection of rarities.—The Viceroy of Algarve.—Polyglottery.—A night-scene.—Modinhas.—Extraordinary Procession.—Blessings of Patriarchal Government.

3 June, 1787.

We went by special invitation to the royal Convent of the Necessidades, belonging to the Oratorians, to see the ceremony of consecrating a father of that order Bishop of Algarve, and were placed fronting the altar in a gallery crowded with important personages in shining raiment, the relations of the new prelate. The floor being spread with rich Persian carpets and velvet cushions, it was pretty good kneeling; but, notwithstanding this comfortable accommodation, I thought the ceremony would never finish. There was a mighty glitter of crosses, censers, mitres, and crosiers, continually in mo-

tion, as several bishops assisted in all their pomp.

The music, which was extremely simple and pathetic, appeared to affect the grandees in my neighbourhood very profoundly, for they put on woful contrite countenances, thumped their breasts, and seemed to think themselves, as most of them are, miserable sinners. Feeling oppressed by the heat and the sermon, I made my retreat slyly and silently from the splendid gallery, and passed through some narrow corridors, as warm as flues, into the garden.

But this was only exchanging one scene of formality and closeness for another. I panted after air, and to obtain that blessing escaped through a little narrow door into the wild free valley of Alcantara. Here all was solitude and humming of bees, and fresh gales blowing from the entrance of the Tagus over the tufted tops of orange gardens. The refreshing sound of water-wheels seemed to give me new life.

I set the sun at defiance, and advanced towards that part of the valley across which stretches the enormous aqueduct you have heard so often mentioned as the most colossal

edifice of its kind in Europe. It has only one row of pointed openings, and the principal arch, which crosses a rapid brook, measures above two hundred and fifty feet in height. The Pont de Garde and Caserta have several rows of arches one above the other, which, by dividing the attention, take off from the size of the whole. There is a vastness in this single range that strikes with astonishment. I sat down on a fragment of rock, under the great arch, and looked up to the vaulted stone-work so high above me with a sensation of awe not unallied to fear; as if the building I gazed upon was the performance of some immeasurable being endued with gigantic strength, who might perhaps take a fancy to saunter about his works this morning, and, in mere awkwardness, crush me to atoms.

Hard by the spot where I sat are several inclosures filled with canes, eleven or twelve feet high: their fresh green leaves, agitated by the feeblest wind, form a perpetual murmur. I am fond of this rustling, and suffered myself to be lulled by it into a state of very necessary repose after the fatigues of scrambling over crags and precipices.

As soon as I returned from my walk, Horne took me to dine with him, and afterwards to the Marialva Palace to pay the Grand Prior a visit. The court-yard, filled with shabby two-wheeled chaises, put me in mind of the entrance of a French post-house; a recollection not weakened by the sight of several ample heaps of manure, between which we made the best of our way up the great staircase, and had near tumbled over a swingeing sow and her numerous progeny, which escaped from under our legs with bitter squeakings.

This hubbub announced our arrival, so out came the Grand Prior, his nephew, the old Abade, and a troop of domestics. All great Portuguese families are infested with herds of these, in general, ill-favoured dependants; and none more than the Marialvas, who dole out every day three hundred portions, at least, of rice and other eatables to as many greedy devourers.

The Grand Prior had shed his pontifical garments and did the honours of the house, and conducted us with much agility all over the apartments, and through the *manège*, where the old Marquis, his brother, though at a very

advanced age, displays feats of the most consummate horsemanship. He seems to have a decided taste for clocks, compasses, and time-keepers. I counted no less than ten in his bed-chamber; four or five in full swing, making a loud hissing: they were chiming and striking away (for it was exactly six) when I followed my conductor up and down half-a-dozen staircases into a saloon hung with rusty damask.

A table in the centre of this antiquated apartment was covered with rarities brought forth for our inspection; curious shell-work, ivory crucifixes, models of ships, housings embroidered with feathers, and the Lord knows what besides, stinking of camphor enough to knock one down.

Whilst we were staring with all our eyes and holding our handkerchiefs to our noses, the Count of V———, Viceroy of Algarve, made his appearance, in grand pea-green and pink and silver gala, straddling and making wry faces as if some disagreeable accident had befallen him. He was, however, in a most gracious mood, and received our eulogiums upon his relation, the new bishop, with much complacency. Our conversation was limpingly

carried on in a great variety of broken languages. Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, and English, had each their turn in rapid succession. The subject of all this polyglottery was the glories and piety of John the Fifth, regret for the extinction of the Jesuits, and the reverse for the death of Pombal, whose memory he holds in something not distantly removed from execration. This flow of eloquence was accompanied by the strangest, most buffoonical grimaces and slobberings I ever beheld, for the Viceroy having a perennial moistness of mouth, drivels at every syllable.

One must not, however, decide too hastily upon outward appearances. This slobbering, canting personage, is a distinguished statesman and good officer, pre-eminent amongst the few who have seen service and given proofs of prowess and capacity.

To escape the long-winded narrations which were pouring warm into my ear, I took refuge near a harpsichord, where Policarpio, one of the first tenors in the Queen's chapel, was singing and accompanying himself. The curtains of the door of an adjoining dark apartment being half drawn, gave me a transient glimpse

of Donna Henriquetta de L——, Don Pedro's sister, advancing one moment and retiring the next, eager to approach and examine us exotic beings, but not venturing to enter the saloon during her mother's absence. She appeared to me a most interesting girl, with eyes full of bewitching languor;—but of what do I talk, I only saw her pale and evanescent, as one fancies one sees objects in a dream. A group of lovely children (her sisters, I believe) sat at her feet upon the ground, resembling genii partially concealed by folds of drapery in some grand allegorical picture by Rubens or Paul Veronese.

Night approaching, lights glimmered on the turrets, terraces, and every part of the strange huddle of buildings of which this morisco-looking palace is composed; half the family were engaged in reciting the litanies of saints, the other in freaks and frolics, perhaps of no very edifying nature: the monotonous staccato of the guitar, accompanied by the low soothing murmur of female voices singing modinhas, formed altogether a strange though not unpleasant combination of sounds.

I was listening to them with avidity, when a

glare of flambeaus, and the noise of a splashing and dashing of water, called us out upon the verandas, in time to witness a procession scarcely equalled since the days of Noah. I doubt whether his ark contained a more heterogeneous collection of animals than issued from a scalera with fifty oars, which had just landed the old Marquis of M. and his son Don Josè, attended by a swarm of musicians, poets, bull-fighters, grooms, monks, dwarfs, and children of both sexes, fantastically dressed.

The whole party, it seems, were returned from a pilgrimage to some saint's nest or other on the opposite shore of the Tagus. First jumped out a hump-backed dwarf, blowing a little squeaking trumpet three or four inches long; then a pair of led captains, apparently commanded by a strange, old, swaggering fellow in a showy uniform, who, I was told, had acted the part of a sort of brigadier-general in some sort of an island. Had it been Barataria, Sancho would soon have sent him about his business, for, if we believe the scandalous chronicle of Lisbon, a more impudent buffoon, parasite, and pilferer seldom existed.

Close at his heels stalked a savage-looking

monk, as tall as Sampson, and two Capuchin friars, heavily laden, but with what sort of provision I am ignorant; next came a very slim and sallow-faced apothecary, in deep sables, completely answering in gait and costume the figure one fancies to one's self of Senhor Apuntador, in Gil Blas, followed by a half-crazed improvisatore, spouting verses at us as he passed under the balustrades against which we were leaning.

He was hardly out of hearing before a confused rabble of watermen and servants with bird-cages, lanterns, baskets of fruit, and chaplets of flowers, came gamboling along to the great delight of a bevy of children; who, to look more like the inhabitants of Heaven than even Nature designed, had light fluttering wings attached to their rose-coloured shoulders. Some of these little theatrical angels were extremely beautiful, and had their hair most coquettishly arranged in ringlets.

The old Marquis is doatingly fond of them; night and day they remain with him, imparting all the advantages that can possibly be derived from fresh and innocent breath to a declining constitution. The patriarch of the

Marialvas has followed this regimen many years, and also some others which are scarcely credible. Having a more than Roman facility of swallowing an immense profusion of dainties, and making room continually for a fresh supply, he dines alone every day between two silver canteens of extraordinary magnitude. Nobody in England would believe me if I detailed the enormous repast I saw spread out for him; but let your imagination loose upon all that was ever conceived in the way of gormandizing, and it will not in this case exceed the reality.

As soon as the contents, animal and vegetable, of the principal scalera, and three or four other barges in its train, had been deposited in their respective holes, corners, and roosting-places, I received an invitation from the old Marquis to partake of a collation in his apartment. Not less, I am certain, than fifty servants were in waiting, and exclusive of half-a-dozen wax-torches, which were borne in state before us, above a hundred tapers of different sizes were lighted up in the range of rooms, intermingled with silver braziers and cassolettes diffusing a very pleasant perfume.

I found the master of all this magnificence most courteous, affable, and engaging. There is an urbanity and good-humour in his looks, gestures, and tone of voice, that prepossesses instantaneously in his favour, and justifies the universal popularity he enjoys, and the affectionate name of Father, by which the Queen and Royal Family often address him. All the favours of the crown have been heaped upon him by the present and preceding sovereigns, a tide of prosperity uninterrupted even during the grand vizariat of Pombal. "Act as you judge wisest with the rest of my nobility," used to say the King Don Joseph to this redoubted minister; "but beware how you interfere with the Marquis of Marialva."

In consequence of this decided predilection, the Marialva Palace became in many cases a sort of rallying point, an asylum for the oppressed; and its master, in more than one instance, a shield against the thunderbolts of a too powerful minister. The recollections of these times seem still to be kept alive; for the heart-felt respect, the filial adoration, I saw paid the old Marquis, was indeed most remarkable; his slightest glances were obeyed, and the person

on whom they fell seemed gratified and animated; his sons, the Marquis of Tancos and Don Josè de Meneses, never approached to offer him anything without bending the knee; and the Conde de Villaverde, the heir of the great house of Anjeja, as well as the Viceroy of Algarve, stood in the circle which was formed around him, receiving a kind or gracious word with the same thankful earnestness as courtiers who hang upon the smiles and favour of their sovereign. I shall long remember the grateful sensations with which this scene of reciprocal kindness filled me; it appeared an interchange of amiable sentiments; beneficence diffused without guile or affectation, and protection received without sullen or abject servility.

How preferable is patriarchal government of this nature to the cold theories pedantic sophists would establish, and which, should success attend their selfish atheistical ravings, bid fair to undermine the best and surest props of society. When parents cease to be honoured by their children, and the feelings of grateful subordination in those of helpless age or condition are unknown, kings will soon cease

to reign, and republics to be governed by the councils of experience; anarchy, rapine, and massacre will walk the earth, and the abode of dæmons be transferred from hell to our unfortunate planet.

LETTER X.

Festival of the Corpo de Deos.—Striking decoration of the streets.—The Patriarchal Cathedral.—Coming forth of the Sacrament in awful state.—Gorgeous procession.—Bewildering confusion of sounds.

7th June.

A MOST sonorous peal of bells, an alarming rattle of drums, and a piercing flourish of trumpets, roused me at daybreak. You are too piously disposed to be ignorant that this day is the festival of the Corpo de Deos. I had half a mind to have stayed at home, turning over a curious collection of Portuguese chronicles the Prior of Avis has just sent to me; but I was told such wonders of the expected procession that I could not refuse giving myself a little trouble in order to witness them.

Everybody was gone before I set out, and the streets of the suburb I inhabit, as well as those in the city through which I passed in my way to the patriarchal cathedral, were entirely

deserted. A pestilence seemed to have swept the Great Square and the busy environs of the Exchange and India House; for even vagrants, scavengers, and beggars, in the last state of decrepitude, had all hobbled away to the scene of action. A few miserable curs sniffing at offals alone remained in the deserted streets, and I saw no human being at any of the windows, except half-a-dozen scabby children blubbering at being kept at home.

The murmur of the crowds, assembled round the *patriarchale*, reached us a long while before we got into the midst of them, for we advanced with difficulty between rows of soldiers drawn up in battle array. Upon turning a dark angle, overshadowed by the high buildings of the seminary adjoining the patriarchale, we discovered houses, shops, and palaces, all metamorphosed into tents, and hung from top to bottom with red damask, tapestry, satin coverlids, and fringed counterpanes glittering with gold. I thought myself in the midst of the Mogul's encampment, so pompously described by Bernier.

The front of the Great Church in particular was most magnificently curtained; it rises from a vast flight of steps, which were covered to-day

with the yeomen of the Queen's guard in their rich party-coloured velvet dresses, and a multitude of priests bearing a gorgeous variety of painted and silken banners; flocks of sallow monks, white, brown, and black, kept pouring in continually, like turkeys driving to market.

This part of the holy display lasting a tiresome while, I grew weary, and left the balcony, where we were placed most advantageously, and got into the church. High mass was performing with awful pomp, incense ascending in clouds, and the light of innumerable tapers blazing on the diamonds of the ostensory, just elevated by the patriarch with trembling devout hands to receive the mysterious wafer.

Before the close of the ceremony, I regained my window, to have a full view of the coming forth of the Sacrament. All was expectation and silence in the people. The guards had ranged them on each side of the steps before the entrance of the church. At length a shower of aromatic herbs and flowers announced the approach of the patriarch, bearing the host under a regal canopy, surrounded by grandees, and preceded by a long train of mitred figures, their hands joined in prayer, their scar-

let and purple vestments sweeping the ground, their attendants bearing croziers, crosses, and other insignia of pontifical grandeur.

The procession slowly descending the flights of stairs to the sound of choirs and the distant thunder of artillery, lost itself in a winding street decorated with embroidered hangings, and left me with my senses in a whirl, and my eyes dazzled, as if awakened from a vision of celestial splendour. . . . . My head swims at this moment, and my ears tingle with a confusion of sounds, bells, voices, and the echoes of cannon, prolonged by mountains and wafted over waters.

LETTER XI.

Dinner at the country-house of Mr. S——.—His Brazilian wife.—Magnificent repast.—A tragic damsel.

11th June, 1787.

To-day we were engaged to dine in the country at a villa belonging to a gentleman, whose volley of names, when pronounced with the true Portuguese twang, sounds like an expectoration—Josè Street-Arriaga-Brum da Silveira. Our hospitable host is of Irish extraction, boasts a stature of six feet, proportionable breadth, a ruddy countenance, herculean legs, and all the exterior attributes, at least, of that enterprising race, who often have the luck of marrying great fortunes. About a year or two ago he bore off a wealthy Brazilian heiress, and is now master of a large estate and a fubsical, squat wife, with a head not unlike that of Holofernes in old tapestry, and shoulders that act the part of

a platter with rather too much exactitude. Poor soul! to be sure, she is neither a Venus nor a Hebe, has a rough lip, and a manly voice, and I fear is somewhat inclined to be dropsical; but her smiles are frequent and fondling, and she cleaves to her husband with great perseverance.

He is an odd character, will accept of no employment, civil or military, and affects a bullying frankness, that I should think must displease very much in this country, where independence either in fortune or sentiment is a crime seldom if ever tolerated.

Mr. S—— likes a display, and the repast he gave us was magnificent; sixty dishes at least, eight smoking roasts, and every ragout, French, English, and Portuguese, that could be thought of. The dessert appeared like the model of a fortification. The principal cake-tower measured, I dare say, three feet perpendicular in height. The company was not equal either in number or consequence to the splendour of the entertainment.

Had not Miss Sill and Bezerra been luckily in my neighbourhood, I should have perished with *ennui*. One stately damsel, with portentous

eyebrows, and looks that reproached the male part of the assembly with inattention, was the only lady of the palace Mr. S—— had invited.

I expected to have met the whole troop of my Botanic Garden acquaintance, and to have escorted them about the vineyards and citron-orchards which surround this villa; but, alas! I was not destined to any such amusing excursion. The tragic damsel, who I am told has been unhappy in her tender attachments, took my arm, and never quitted it during a long walk through Mr. S——'s ample possessions. We conversed in Italian, and paid the birds that were singing, and the rills that were murmuring, many fine compliments in a sort of prose run mad, borrowed from operas and serenatas, the Aminto of Tasso, and the Adone of Marini.

The sun was just diffusing his last rays over the distant rocks of Cintra, the air balsamic, and the paths amongst the vines springing with fresh herbage and a thousand flowers revived by last night's rain. Giving up the narrow tract which leads through these rural regions to the signora, I stalked by her side in a furrow well garnished with nettles, acan-

thus, and dwarf aloes, stinging and scratching myself at every step. This penance, and the disappointment I was feeling most acutely, put me not a little out of humour; I regretted so delicious an evening should pass away in such forlorn company, and lacerating my legs to so little purpose. How should I have enjoyed rambling with the young Irish girl about these pleasant clover paths, between festoons of luxuriant leaves and tendrils, not fastened to stiff poles and stumpy stakes as in France and Switzerland, but climbing up light canes eight or ten feet in height.

Pinioned as I was, you may imagine I felt no inclination to prolong a walk which already had been prolonged unconscionably. I escaped tea and playing at voltarete, made a solemn bow to the solemn damsel, and got home before it was quite dark.

LETTER XII.

Pass the day at Belem.—Visit the neighbouring Monastery.—Habitation of King Emanuel.—A gold Custodium of exquisite workmanship.—The Church.—Bonfires on the edge of the Tagus.—Fire-works.—Images of the Holy One of Lisbon.

June 12th, 1787.

We passed the day quite *en famille* at Belem with a whole legion of Marialvas. Some reverend fathers, of I know not what community, had sent them immense messes of soup, very thick, slab, and oily; a portion which, it seems, the faithful are accustomed to swallow the eve of St. Anthony's festival.

As soon as I decently could, after a collation which was served under an awning stretched over one of the terraces, I stole out of the circle of lords, ladies, dwarfs, monks, buffoons, bullies, and almoners, to visit the neighbouring monastery. I ascended the great stairs, constructed at the expense of the Infanta Catherine, King Charles the Second's dowager, and after walk-

ing in the cloisters of Emanuel, looked into the library, which is far from being in the cleanest or best ordered condition. The spacious and lofty cloisters present a striking spread of arches, which, though not in the purest style, attract the eye by their delicately-carved arabesque ornament, and the warm reddish hue of the marble. The corridor, into which open an almost endless range of cells, is full five hundred feet in length. Each window has a commodious resting-place, where the monks loll at their ease and enjoy the view of the river.

In a little dark treasury communicating by winding-stairs with that part of the edifice tradition points out as the habitation of King Emanuel, when at certain holy seasons he retired within these precincts, I was shown by candlelight some extremely curious plate, particularly a custodium, made in the year 1506, of the pure gold of Quiloa. Nothing can be more beautiful as a specimen of elaborate gothic sculpture, than this complicated enamelled mass of flying buttresses and fretted pinnacles, with the twelve Apostles in their

niches, under canopies formed of ten thousand wreaths and ramifications.

From this gloomy recess, I was conduced to the church, one of the largest in Portugal, vast, solemn, and fantastic, like the interior of the Temple of Jerusalem, as I have seen it figured in some old German Bibles. There was little, however, in the altars or monuments worth any very minute investigation.

It fell dark before I went out at the great porch, and found the wide space before it beginning to catch a vivid gleam from a line of bonfires on the edge of the Tagus. I could hardly reach my carriage without being singed by squibs and crackers, and wished myself out the moment I got into it, a rocket having shot up just under the noses of my mules and scared them terribly.

Unless St. Anthony lulls me asleep by a miracle, I must expect no rest to-night, there is such a whizzing of fireworks, blazing of bonfires, and flourishing of French horns in honour of to-morrow, the five hundred and fifty-fifth anniversary of that memorable day, when the Holy One of Lisbon passed by a soft transition to the joys of Para-

dise. I saw his image at the door of almost every house and even hovel of this populous capital, placed on an altar, and decked with a profusion of wax-lights and flowers.

LETTER XIII.

The New Church of St. Anthony.—Sprightly Music.—Enthusiastic Sermon.—The good Prior of Avis.—Visit to the Carthusian Convent of Cachiez.—Spectres of the Order.—Striking effigy of the Saviour.—A young and melancholy Carthusian.—The Cemetery.

June 13th, 1787.

I SLEPT better than I expected: the Saint was propitious, and during the night cooled the ardour of his votaries and the flames of their bonfires by a vernal shower, which pattered agreeably this morning amongst the vine-leaves of my garden. The clouds dispersed about eight o'clock, and at nine, just as I ascended the steps of the new church built over the identical house where St. Anthony was born, the sun shone out in all its splendour.

I cannot say this edifice recalled to my mind the magnificent sanctuary of Padua, which five years ago on this very day impressed my imagination so forcibly. Here are no constellations

of golden lamps depending by glittering chains from a mysterious vaulted ceiling, no arcades of alabaster, no sculptured marbles. The church is supported by two rows of pillars neatly carved in stone, but wretchedly proportioned. Over the high altar, where stands the revered image in the midst of a bright illumination, was stretched a canopy of flowered velvet. This drapery, richly fringed and tasseled, marks out the spot formerly occupied by the chamber of the saint, and receives an amber-light from a row of tall casement windows, the woodwork gleaming with burnished gold.

A great many broad English faces burst forth from amongst the crowd of profane vulgar at the portal of the church, and all their eyes were directed to their enthusiastic countryman, but he was not to be stared out of a decent countenance.

The ceremony was extremely pompous. A prelate of the first rank, with a considerable detachment of priests from the royal chapel, officiated to the sounds of lively jigs and ranting minuets, better calculated to set a parcel of water-drinkers a dancing in a pump-room, than

to direct the movements of a pontiff and his assistants.

After much indifferent music, vocal and instrumental, performed full gallop in the most rapid allegro, Frè Joaô Jacinto, a famous preacher, mounted the pulpit, lifted up hands and eyes, and poured forth a torrent of sounding phrases in honour of St. Anthony. What would I not give for such a voice?—it would almost have reached from Dan unto Beersheba!

The Father has undoubtedly great powers of elocution, and none of that canting, nasal whine so common in the delivery of monkish sermons. He treated kings, tetrarchs, and conquerors, the heroes and sages of antiquity, with ineffable contempt; reduced their palaces and fortifications to dust, their armies to pismires, their imperial vestments to cobwebs, and impressed all his audience, except the heretical squinters at the door, with the most thorough conviction of St. Anthony's superiority over these objects of an erring and impious admiration.

"Happy," exclaimed the preacher, "were those gothic ages, falsely called ages of barbarism and ignorance, when the hearts of men,

uncorrupted by the delusive beverage of philosophy, were open to the words of truth falling like honey from the mouths of saints and confessors, such words as distilled from the lips of Anthony, yet a suckling hanging at the breast in this very spot. It was here the spirit of the Most High descended upon him, here that he conceived the sublime intention of penetrating into the most turbulent parts of Europe, setting the inclemency of seasons and the malice of men at defiance, and sprinkling amongst lawless nations the seeds of grace and repentance. There, my brethren, is the door out of which he issued. Do you not see him in the habit of a Menino de Coro, smiling with all the graces of innocence, and dispensing with his infant hands to a group of squalid children the portion of nourishment he has just received from his mother?

"But Anthony, from the first dawn of his existence, lived for others, and not for himself: he forewent even the luxury of meditation, and instead of retiring into a peaceful cell, rushed into the world, helpless and unprotected, lifting high the banner of the Cross amidst perils and uproar, appeasing wars, settling differences both

public and domestic, exhorting at the risk of his life ruffians and plunderers to make restitution, and armed misers, guarding their coffers with bloody swords, to open their hearts and their hands to the distresses of the widow and the fatherless.

"Anthony ever sighed after the crown of martyrdom, and had long entertained an ardent desire of passing over into Morocco, and exposing himself to the fury of its bigoted and cruel sovereign; but the commands of his superior retain him on the point of embarkation; he makes a sacrifice of even this most laudable and glorious ambition; he traverses Spain, repairs to Assisi, embraces the rigid order of the great St. Francis, and continues to his last hour administering consolation to the dejected, fortifying their hopes of heaven, and confirming the faith of such as were wavering or deluded by a succession of prodigies. The dead are raised, the sick are healed, the sea is calmed by a glance of St. Anthony; even the lowest ranks of the creation are attracted by eloquence more than human, and give marks of sensibility. Fish swim in shoals to hear the word of the Lord; and to convince the obdurate and

those accursed whose hearts the false reasoning of the world had hardened, mules and animals the most perversely obstinate humble themselves to the earth when Anthony holds forth the Sacrament, and acknowledge the presence of the Divinity."

The sermon ended, fiddling began anew with redoubled vigour, and I, disgusted with such unseasonable levity, retired home in dudgeon. This little cloud of peevishness was soon dissipated by the cheering presence of the good Prior of Avis, than whom there exists not, perhaps, in this world a more benign, evangelical character; one who gives glory to God with less ostentation, or bears a more unaffected goodwill towards men. This excellent prelate had been passing his morning, not in attending pompous ceremonies, but in consoling the sick and relieving the indigent; climbing up to their miserable chambers to afford assistance in the name of the saint whose festival was celebrating, and whose fame, for every charitable beneficent act, had been handed down by the inhabitants of Lisbon from father to child, through a long series of generations.

Our discourse was not of a nature to in-

cline me to relish pomps and vanities. I waved seeing the procession which was expected to pass through the principal streets of the city, and, accompanied by my revered friend, enjoyed the serenity of the evening on the shore of Belem. We stopped as we passed by the Marialva palace, and took up Don Pedro and his nursing father, the old Abade, who proposed a visit to the Carthusian convent of Cachiez.

In about half an hour we were set down before the church, which fronts the royal gardens, and were ushered into a solemn, silent quadrangle. Several spectres of the order were gliding about the cloisters, which branch off from this court. In the middle is a marble fountain, shaded by pyramids of clipped box; around are seven or eight small chapels; one of which contains a coloured image of the Saviour in the last dreadful agonies of his passion, covered with livid bruises and corrupted gore.

Whilst we were examining this too faithful effigy, some of the monks, by leave of their superior, gathered around us; one of them, a tall interesting figure, attracted my attention by the deep melancholy which sat upon his

features. Upon inquiry, I learned he was only two-and-twenty years of age, of illustrious parentage, and lively talents; but the immediate cause of his having sought these mansions of stillness and mortification, the Grand Prior seemed loth to communicate.

I could not help observing, as this young victim stood before me, and I contemplated the evening light thrown on the arcades of the quadrangle, how many setting suns he was likely to behold wasting their gleams upon these walls, and what a wearisome succession of years he had in all probability devoted himself to consume within their precincts. The eyes of the good prior filled with tears, Verdeil shuddered, and the Abade, forgetting the superstitious part he generally acts in religious places, exclaimed loudly against the toleration of human sacrifices, and the folly of permitting those to renounce the world, whose youth incapacitates them from making a due estimate of its sorrows or advantages. As for Don Pedro, his serious disposition received additional gloom from the objects with which we were environed.

The chill gust that blew from an arched

hall where the fathers are interred, and whose pavement returned a hollow sound as we walked over it, struck him with horror. It was the first time of his entering a Carthusian convent, and, to my surprise, he appeared ignorant of the severities of the order.

The sun set before we regained our carriage, and our conversation the whole way home partook of the impression which the scenery we had been contemplating inspired.

LETTER XIV.

Curious succession of visiters.—A Seraphic Doctor—Monsenhor Aguilar.—Mob of old hags, children, and ragamuffins.—Visit to the Theatre in the Rua d'os Condes.—The Archbishop Confessor.—Brazilian Modinhas.—Bewitching nature of that music.—Nocturnal processions.—Enthusiasm of the young Conde de Villanova.—No accounting for fancies.

14th June, 1787.

It was my lot this afternoon to receive a curious succession of visiters. First came Pombal, who looked worn down with gay living and late hours; but there is an ease and fashion in his address not common in this country. Though he possesses one of the largest landed estates in the kingdom, (about one hundred and twenty thousand crowns a-year,) he wished me to understand that his dread father, the scourge and terror of the noblest houses in Portugal, the sole dispenser during so many years of the royal treasure, died, notwithstanding, in distressed circumstances, loaded with

debts contracted in supporting the dignity of his post.

The next who did me the honour of a visit was the Judge Conservator of the English factory, Joaô Telles, a relation, legitimate or illegitimate (I know not exactly which), of the Penalvas. This man, who has risen to one of the highest posts of the law by the sole strength of his abilities, has a nervous, original style of expression, which put me in mind of Lord Thurlow; but to all this vigour of character and diction, he joins the pliability and subtleness of a serpent; and those he cannot take by storm, he is sure of overcoming by every soothing art of flattery and insinuation.

As soon as he was departed, entered a pair of monks with a basket of sweetmeats in cut paper, from a good lady abbess, beseeching me to portion out two sweet virgins as God's spouses in some neighbouring monastery.

They were scarcely dismissed, before Father Theodore d'Almeida and another of his brethren were ushered in. The whites of their eyes alone were visible, nor could Whitfield himself, the original Doctor Squintum of Foote, have squinted more scientifically.

I was all attention to Father Theodore's seraphic discourse; so excellent an opportunity of hearing a first-rate specimen of hypocritical cant was not to be neglected. No sooner had the fathers been conducted to the stairs-head with due ceremony, than Monsenhor Aguilar, one of the prelates of the Patriarchal Cathedral, was announced. He confirmed me in the opinion I entertained of Father Theodore. No person can accuse Aguilar of being a hypocrite. He lays himself but too much open, and treats the church from which he derives a handsome maintenance, not as a patroness, but as an humble companion; the constant butt and object of his sarcasms. In Portugal, even in the year 1787, such conduct is madness, and I fear will expose him one day or other to severe persecution.

We were roused from a peaceful dish of tea by a loud hubbub in the street, and running to the balcony, found a beastly mob of old hags, children, and ragamuffins assembled, headed by half-a-dozen drummers, and as many negroes in scarlet jackets, blowing French-horns with unusual vehemence, and pointing them directly at the house. I was wondering at this

Jericho fashion of besieging one's door, and drawing back to avoid being singed by a rocket which whizzed along within an inch of my nose, when one of the servants entered with a crucifix on a silver salver, and a mighty kind message from the nuns of the Convent of the Sacrament, who had sent their musicians with timbrels and fireworks, to invite us to some grand doings at their convent, in honour of the Festival of the Heart of Jesus. Really, these church parties begin to lose in my eyes great part of the charm which novelty gave them. I have had pretty nearly my fill of motets, and Kyrie eleisons, and incense, and sweetmeats, and sermons.

That heretic Verdeil, who would almost as soon be in hell at once as in such a cloying heaven, would not let me rest till I went with him to the theatre in the Rua d'os Condes, in order to dissipate by a little profane air the fumes of so much holiness. The play afforded me more disgust than amusement; the theatre is low and narrow, and the actors, for there are no actresses, below criticism. Her Majesty's absolute commands having swept females off the stage, their parts are acted by calvish

young fellows. Judge what a pleasing effect this metamorphosis must produce, especially in the dancers, where one sees a stout shepherdess in virgin white, with a soft blue beard, and a prominent collar-bone, clenching a nosegay in a fist that would almost have knocked down Goliah, and a train of milk-maids attending her enormous foot-steps, tossing their petticoats over their heads at every step. Such sprawling, jerking, and ogling I never saw before, and hope never to see again.

We were heartily sick of the performance before it was half finished, and the night being serene and pleasant, were tempted to take a ramble in the Great Square, which received a faint gleam from the lights in the apartments of the palace, every window being thrown open to catch the breeze. The Archbishop Confessor displayed his goodly person at one of the balconies; from a clown, this now most important personage became a common soldier, from a common soldier a corporal, from a corporal a monk, in which station he gave so many proofs of toleration and good-humour, that Pombal, who happened to stumble upon him by one of those chances which set all cal-

culation at defiance, judged him sufficiently shrewd, jovial, and ignorant, to make a very harmless and comfortable confessor to her Majesty, then Princess of Brazil: since her accession to the throne, he is become Archbishop, *in partibus,* Grand Inquisitor, and the first spring in the present Government of Portugal. I never saw a sturdier fellow. He seems to anoint himself with the oil of gladness, to laugh and grow fat in spite of the critical situation of affairs in this kingdom, and the just fears all its true patriots entertain of seeing it once more relapse into a Spanish province.

At a window immediately over his right reverence's shining forehead, we spied out the Lacerdas, two handsome sisters, maids of honour to the Queen, waving their hands to us very invitingly. This was encouragement enough for us to run up a vast many flights of stairs to their apartment, which was crowded with nephews and nieces and cousins clustering round two very elegant young women, who, accompanied by their singing-master, a little square friar, with greenish eyes, were warbling Brazilian modinhas.

Those who have never heard this original sort of music, must and will remain ignorant of the most bewitching melodies that ever existed since the days of the Sybarites. They consist of languid interrupted measures, as if the breath was gone with excess of rapture, and the soul panting to meet the kindred soul of some beloved object. With a childish carelessness they steal into the heart, before it has time to arm itself against their enervating influence; you fancy you are swallowing milk, and are admitting the poison of voluptuousness into the closest recesses of your existence. At least, such beings as feel the power of harmonious sounds are doing so; I won't answer for hard-eared, phlegmatic northern animals.

An hour or two passed away almost imperceptibly in the pleasing delirium these syren notes inspired, and it was not without regret I saw the company disperse and the spell dissolve. The ladies of the apartment having received a summons to attend her Majesty's supper, curtsied us off very gracefully, and vanished.

In our way home we met the Sacrament, enveloped in a glare of light, marching in state

to pay some sick person a farewell visit; and that hopeful young nobleman, the Conde de Villa Nova,* preceding the canopy in a scarlet mantle, and tingling a silver bell. He is always in close attendance upon the Host, and passes the flower of his days in this singular species of danglement. No lover was ever more jealous of his mistress than this ingenuous youth of his bell. He cannot endure any other person should give it vibration. The parish officers of the extensive and populous district in which his palace is situated, from respect to his birth and opulence, indulge him in this caprice, and indeed a more perseverant bell-bearer they could not have chosen. At all hours and in all weathers he is ready to perform this holy office. In the dead of the night, or in the most intense heat of the day, out he issues and down he dives, or up he climbs, to any dungeon or garret where spiritual assistance of this nature is demanded.

It has been again and again observed, that there is no accounting for fancies. Every person has his own, which he follows to the best of his means and abilities. The old Ma-

* Since Marquis of Abrantes.

rialva's delights are centered between his two silver recipiendaries; the Marquis his son in dancing attendance upon the Queen; and Villa Nova, in announcing with his bell to all true believers the approach of celestial majesty. The present rage of the scribbler of all these extravagances is modinhas, and under its prevalence he feels half-tempted to set sail for the Brazils, the native land of these enchanting compositions, to live in tents, such as the Chevalier de Parny describes in his agreeable little voyage, and swing in hammocks, or glide over smooth mats surrounded by bands of youthful minstrels, diffusing at every step the perfume of jasmine and roses.

LETTER XV.

Excessive sultriness of Lisbon.—Night-sounds of the city.—Public gala in the garden of the Conde de Villa Nova.—Visit to the Anjeja Palace.—The heir of the family.—Marvellous narrations of a young priest.—Convent of Savoyard nuns.—Father Theodore's chickens.—Sequestered group of beauties.—Singing of the Scarlati.

29th June, 1787.

THE bright sunshine which has lately been our portion, glorious as it is, begins to tire me. Twenty times a day I cannot help wishing myself extended at full-length upon the fresh herbage of some shady English valley, where fairies gambol in the twilights of Midsummer, whispering in the ears of their sleeping favourites the good or evil fortunes which await them. It is too hot for these oracular little elvish beings in Portugal, one must not here expect their inspirations; but would to Heaven some revelation of this or any other nature had warned me off in time, from the

blinding dust and excessive sultriness of Lisbon and its neighbourhood. How silly, when one is well and cool, to gad abroad, in the vain hope of making what is really best, better. Depend upon it, there is more vernal delight and joy in our green hills and copses, than in all these stunted olive-fields and sun-burnt promontories.

We have a homely saying, that what is poison to one man is meat to another, and true enough; for these days and nights of glowing temperature, which oppress me beyond endurance, are the delight and boast of the inhabitants of this capital. The heat seems not only to have new venomed the stings of the fleas and the musquitoes, but to have drawn out, the whole night long, all the human ephemera of Lisbon. They frisk, and dance, and tinkle their guitars from sunset to sunrise. The dogs, too, keep yelping and howling without intermission; and what with the bellowing of litanies by parochial processions, the whizzing of fireworks, which devotees are perpetually letting off in honour of some member or other of the celestial hierarchy, and the squabbles of bullying rake-hells, who scour the

streets in search of adventures, there is no getting a wink of sleep, even if the heat would allow it.

As to those quiet nocturnal parties, where ingenuous youths rest their heads, not on the lap of earth, but on that of their mistresses, who are soothingly employed in delivering the jetty locks of their lovers from too abundant a population, I have nothing to say against them, nor am I much disturbed by the dashing sound of a few downfalls* from the windows; but these dog-howlings exceed every annoyance of the kind I ever endured, and give no slight foretaste of the infernal regions.

Nothing but amusement and racket being thought of here at this season (when to celebrate St. Peter's festival with all the noise and extravagance in your power, is not more a profane inclination than a pious duty), that simpleton, the Conde de Villa Nova, opened his

* Writers of travels are sadly given to exaggeration. The author of the Tableau de Lisbonne writes, "Il est dix heures, une foule de P. de Ch. s'avance," &c. From such an account one would suppose the whole line of houses in motion. No such thing. At intervals, to be sure, some accidents of this sort, more or less, slily occur; but by no means in so general and evident a manner.

garden last night to the nob and mob-ility of Lisbon. There was a dull illumination of paper lanterns, and a sort of pavilion awkwardly constructed for dancing, beneath which the prettiest French and English mantua-makers, milliners, and abigails of the metropolis, figured away in cotillons with the Duke of Cadaval and some other young men of the first distinction, who, like many as hopeful in our own capital, are never at their ease but in low company. Two or three of my servants accompanied my tailor to the fête, and returned enraptured with the affable pleasing manners of the foreign milliners and native nobility.

I should have been most happy to remain at home, in the shade of my green blinds, giving ear, through mere laziness, to any nonsense that anybody chose to say to me; but we had been long engaged to dine with Don Diego de Noronha, at the Anjeja Palace.

When we arrived at our destination, we found the heir of the family surrounded by priests and tutors, learning to look out at the window, the chief employment of Portuguese fidalgo life. Oh what a precious collection of stories did I hear at this attic banquet! There

happened to be amongst the company a young oaf of a priest, from I forget what university (I hope not Coimbra), who kept on during the whole dinner favouring us with marvellous narrations, such as the late Queen's pounding a pearl of inestimable value, to swallow in medical potions; and that one of the nuns of the Convent of the Sacrament, having intrigued with old Beelzebub *in propria persona*, had been sent to the Inquisition, and the window through which his infernal majesty had entered upon this gallant exploit, walled up and painted over with red crosses. The same precautionary decoration, continued he, has been bestowed upon every opening in the façade, so that no demon, however sharp-set, can get in again. He would fain also have made us believe, that a woman very fair and plump to the eye, with an overflowing breast of milk, who took in sucklings to nurse cheaper than anybody else, regularly made away with them, and was now in the dungeons of the holy office, accused of having minced up above a score of innocents!

Heaven forbid I should detail any further

particulars of our table-talk; if I did, you would be finely surfeited.

After dinner the company dispersed, some to their couches, some to hear a sonata on the dulcimer, accompanied on the jew's harp by a couple of dwarfs; the heir-apparent, to his beloved window; and Verdeil and I to a convent of Savoyard nuns, at Belem, the coolest, cleanest retirement in the whole neighbourhood, and blessed into the bargain by the especial patronage and inspection of Father Theodore d'Almeida. His reverence, it seems, had been the principal instrument, under Providence, of transplanting these blessed sprouts of holiness from the Convent of the Visitation at Annecy to the glowing climate of Portugal.

As I had just received a sugary epistle from this paragon of piety, recommending his favourite establishment in several pages of ardent panegyric, he could do no less than come forth from his interior nest, and bid us welcome with a countenance arrayed in the sweetest smiles, though I dare say he wished us at old scratch for our intrusion.

"Poor things," said he, speaking of the chickens under education in this coop, "we do

all we can to improve their tender minds and their guileless tongues in foreign languages. Sister Theresa has an admirable knack for teaching arithmetic; our venerable mother is remarkably well-bottomed in grammar, and Sister Francisca Salesia, whom I had the happiness to bring over from Lyons, is not only a most pure and persuasive moralist, but is acknowledged to be one of the first needles in Christendom, so we do tolerably well in embroidery. In music we are no great proficients. We allow of no modinhas, no opera airs; a plain hymn is all you must expect here; in short, we are ill-fitted to receive such distinguished visiters, and have nothing the world would call interesting to recommend us; but then, I, their unworthy confessor, must allow that such sweet, clean consciences as I meet with in this asylum are treasures beyond all that the Indies can furnish."

Both Verdeil and myself, conscious of our own extreme unworthiness, were quite abashed by this sublime declamation, poured forth with hands crossed on the bosom, and eyes turned up to the ceiling, like some images one has seen of St. Ignatius or St. Francis Xavier.

It was a minute at least before his reverence relaxed from this attitude, and, drawing a curtain, condescended to admit us into a spacious parlour, delightfully cool, perfumed with jasmine, and filled with little Brazilian doves, parroquets, and canary birds. Such a cooing and chirping was never heard in greater perfection, except in Mahomet's Paradise; nor were the houries wanting, for in a deep recess, behind a tolerably wide lattice, sat a row of the loveliest young creatures I ever beheld. A daughter of my friend Don Josè de Brito was amongst the number, and her eyes, of the most bewitching softness, seemed to acquire new fascination in this mysterious sort of twilight, beaming from behind a double grating of iron.

Every now and then the birds, not in the least intimidated by the predatory glances of Father Theodore, violated the sanctuary, and pitched upon ivory necks, and were received with ten thousand endearments by the angels of this little sequestered heaven, which looked so refreshing, and formed by its sacred calm so inviting a contrast to the turbulent world without, and its glaring atmosphere, that I could not resist exclaiming, "O that I had wings like

a dove, that I might fly through those bars and be at rest!"

I need not tell you we passed half-an-hour most delightfully in talking of music, gardens, roses, and devotion, with the meninas, and had almost forgotten we were engaged to hear the Scarlati sing. Her father, an old captain of horse, of Italian extraction, lives not far from the Convent of the Visitation, so we had not much time during our transit to experience the woful difference between the cool parlour of the nuns and the suffocating exterior air.

A numerous group of the young ladies' kindred stood ready at the street-door, with all that hospitable courtesy for which the Portuguese are so remarkably distinguished, to usher the strangers up-stairs into a gallery hung with arras and sconces, not unlike the great room of an Italian inn, once the palace of a nobleman. To keep up these post-house ideas, we scented a strong effluvia of the stable, and heard certain stampings and neighings, as if a party of hounnyms had arrived to partake of the concert.

Many strange, aboriginal figures of both sexes were assembled, an uncouth collection enough, I am apt to conjecture; however, I

soon ceased giving them any notice. The young lady of the house charmed me at first sight by her graceful, modest manner; but when she sang some airs, composed by the famous Perez, I was not less delighted than surprised. Her voice modulates with unaffected carelessness into the most pathetic tones.* Though she has adopted the masterly and scientific style of Ferracuti, one of the first singers in the Queen's service, she gives a simplicity of expression to the most difficult passages, that makes them appear the effusions of a young romantic girl warbling to herself in the secret recesses of a forest.

I sat in a dark corner, unconscious of every thing that passed in the apartment, of the sin-

* These affecting tones seem to have made a lasting impression indeed upon the heart of a young man, one of the principal clerks in the Secretary of State's office; he was all admiration, all ardour, his divinity all indifference. After a long period of unavailing courtship, the poor lover, driven to absolute despair, made a donation of all he was worth in the world to the object of his adoration, and threw himself into the Tagus. Providentially he was fished out and brought home, pale and almost inanimate. Such a spectacle, accompanied by so vivid a proof of unlimited passion, had its effect. The lady relented, they were united, and are as happy at this day, I believe, as the recollection of so narrow an escape, and its cause, can make them.

gular figures that entered, or those that went away; the starings, whisperings, and fan-flirtings of the assembly were lost upon me. I could not utter a syllable, and was vexed when an arbitrary old aunt insisted upon no more singing, and proposed a faro-table and a dance.

Most eagerly did I wish all the kindred and their friends petrified for the time being by some obliging necromancer, and would have done any thing, short of engaging my own dear self to the devil, to have obtained an uninterrupted audience of the syren till morning.

LETTER XVI.

Ups-and-downs of Lisbon.—Negro Beldames.—Quinta of Marvilla.—Moonlight view of Lisbon.—Illuminated windows of the Palace.—The old Marquis of Penalva.—Padre Duarte, a famous Jesuit.—Conversation between him and a conceited Physician.—Their ludicrous blunders.—Toad-eaters.—Sonatas.—Portuguese minuets.

30th June, 1787.

. . . . . We sallied out after dinner to pay visits. Never did I behold such cursed ups-and-downs, such shelving descents and sudden rises, as occur at every step one takes in going about Lisbon. I thought myself fifty times on the point of being overturned into the Tagus, or tumbled into sandy ditches, among rotten shoes, dead cats, and negro beldames, who retire into such dens and burrows for the purpose of telling fortunes and selling charms for the ague.

The Inquisition too often lays hold of these wretched sibyls, and works them confoundedly.

I saw one dragging into light as I passed by the ruins of a palace thrown down by the earthquake. Whether a familiar of the Inquisition was griping her in his clutches, or whether she was taking to account by some disappointed votary, I will not pretend to answer. Be that as it may, I was happy to be driven out of sight of this hideous object, whose contortions and howlings were truly horrible.

The more one is acquainted with Lisbon, the less it answers the expectations raised by its magnificent appearance from the river. Could a traveller be suddenly transported without preparation or prejudice to many parts of this city, he would reasonably conclude himself traversing a succession of villages awkwardly tacked together, and overpowered by massive convents. The churches in general are in a woful taste of architecture, the taste of Borromini, with crinkled pediments, furbelowed cornices and turrets, somewhat in the style of old-fashioned French clock-cases, such as Boucher designed with many a scrawl and flourish to adorn the apartments of Madame de Pompadour.

We traversed the city this evening in all its

extent in our way to the Duke d'Alafoens's villa, and gave vast numbers of her most faithful Majesty's subjects an opportunity of staring at the height of the coach-box, the short jacket of the postilion, and other anglicisms of the equipage. The Duke had been summoned to a council of state; but we found the Marquis of Marialva, who went with us round the apartments of the villa, which have nothing remarkable except one or two large saloons of excellent and striking proportions.

He afterwards proposed accompanying us about half-a-mile farther to the quinta of Marvilla, which belongs to his father. This spot has great picturesque beauties. The trees are old and fantastic, bending over ruined fountains and mutilated statues of heroes in armour, variegated by the lapse of years with innumerable tints of purple, green, and yellow. In the centre of almost impenetrable thickets of bay and myrtle, rise strange pyramids of rock-work surrounded by marble lions, that have a magic, symbolical appearance. M—— has feeling enough to respect these uncouth monuments of an age when his ancestors performed so

many heroic achievements, and readily promised me never to sacrifice them and the venerable shades in which they are embowered, to the pert, gaudy taste of modern Portuguese gardening.

We walked part of the way home by the serene light of the full moon rising from behind the mountains on the opposite shore of the Tagus, at this extremity of the metropolis above nine miles broad. Lisbon, which appeared to me so uninteresting a few hours ago, assumed a very different aspect by these soft gleams. The flights of steps, terraces, chapels, and porticos of several convents and palaces on the brink of the river, shone forth like edifices of white marble, whilst the rough cliffs and miserable sheds rising above them were lost in dark shadows. The great square through which we passed was filled with idlers of all sorts and sexes, staring up at the illuminated windows of the palace in hopes of catching a glimpse of her Majesty, the Prince, the Infantas, the Confessor, or Maids of Honour, whisking about from one apartment to the other, and giving ample scope to amusing con-

jectures. I am told the Confessor, though somewhat advanced in his career, is far from being insensible to the allurements of beauty, and pursues the young nymphs of the palace from window to window with juvenile alacrity.

It was nine before we got home, and I had not been long reposing myself after my walk, and arranging some plants I had gathered in the thickets of Marvilla, before three distinct ringings of the bell at my door announced the arrival of some distinguished personage; nor was I disappointed, for in came the old Marquis of Penalva and his son, who till a year ago, when the Queen granted him the same title as his father, was called Conde de Tarouca.

You must have heard frequently of that name. A grandfather of the old Marquis rendered it very illustrious by several important and successful embassies: the splendid entertainments he gave at the Congress of Utrecht, are amply described in Madame du Noyers and several other books of memoirs.

The Penalvas brought this evening in their suite a famous Jesuit, Padre Duarte, whom Pombal thought of sufficient consequence to be imprisoned for eighteen years, and a tall,

knock-kneed, rhubarb-faced physician, in a gorgeous suit of glistening satin, one of the most ungain, conceited professors of the art of murdering I ever met with. Between the Jesuit and the doctor I had enough to do to keep my temper or countenance. They prated incessantly, pretended to have the most implicit admiration for everything that came from England, either in the way of furniture or poetry, and confounding dates, names, and subjects in one strange jumble, asked whether Sir Peter Lely was not the actual President of our Royal Academy, and launched forth into a warm encomium of my countryman Hans Holbein. I begged leave to assure these complaisant sages, that the last-mentioned artist was born at Basle, and that Sir Peter Lely had been dead a century. They stared a little at this information, but continued, nevertheless, in full song, playing off a sounding peal of compliments upon our national proficiency in painting, watch-making, the stocking manufactory, &c. when General Forbes came in and made a diversion in my favour. We had some conversation upon the present state of Portugal, and the risks it runs of being swallowed up by

the negotiations, not by the arms of Spain, ere many years are elapsed. . . . . .

Our discourse was interrupted by the arrival of a fiddler, a priest, and an Italian musician, humble servants and toad-eaters to my illustrious guests. They fell a thumping my poor piano-forte, and playing sonatas whether I would or not. You are aware I am no great friend to sonatas, and that certain chromatic, squeaking tones of a fiddle, when the performer turns up the whites of his eyes, waggles a greasy chin, and affects ecstasies, set my teeth on edge. The griping countenance of the doctor was enough to produce that effect already, without the assistance of his fellow parasites, the priest and musician. Padre Duarte seemed to like them no better than myself; General Forbes had wisely withdrawn; and the old Marquis, inspired by a pathetic adagio, glided suddenly across the room in a step which I took for the beginning of a ballet heroique, but which turned out a minuet in the Portuguese style, with all its kicks and flourishes, in which Miss S——, who had come in to tea, was persuaded to join, much against her inclination. It was no sooner ended, than the doctor displayed his rueful

length of person in such a twitching angular minuet, as I want words to describe; so, between the sister-arts of music and dancing, I passed a delectable evening. This set shan't catch me at home again in a hurry.

LETTER XVII.

Dog-howlings.—Visit to the Convent of San Josè di Ribamar. —Breakfast at the Marquis of Penalvas.—Magnificent and hospitable reception.—Whispering in the shade of mysterious chambers.—The Bishop of Algarve.—Evening scene in the garden of Marvilla.

July 2nd, 1787.

I WAS awakened in the night by a horrid cry of dogs; not that infernal pack which Dryden tells us in his divine tale of Theodore and Honoria went regularly a ghost-hunting every Friday, howled half so dreadfully: Lisbon is more infested than any other capital I ever inhabited by herds of these half-famished animals, making themselves of use and importance by ridding the streets of some part, at least, of their unsavoury incumbrances.

Verdeil, who could not sleep any more than myself, on account of a furious and long protracted battle between two parties of these hell-hounds, persuaded me to rise with the

sun, and proceed on horseback along the shore of Belem, which appeared in all its morning glory; the sky diversified by streaming clouds of purple edged with gold, and the sea by innumerable vessels of different sizes shooting along in various directions, whilst the waves at the entrance of the harbour were in violent agitation, all froth and foam.

To vary our excursion a little, we struck out of the common track, and visited the convent of San Josè di Ribamar. The building is irregular and picturesque, rising from a craggy eminence, and backed by a thicket of elm, bay, and arbor judæ. We were shown by simple, smiling friars, into a small court with cloisters, supported by low Tuscan columns. A fountain playing in the middle and sprinkling a profusion of flowers, gave an oriental air to this little court that pleased me exceedingly. The monks seem sensible of its merits, for they keep it tolerably clean, which is more than I will say for their garden. Bindweed and dwarf-aloes almost prevented our crossing it in our way to the thicket; a delicious retreat, the refuge and comfort of half the birds in the country. Thanks to monkish laziness, the

underwood remains unclipped, and intrudes wherever it pleases upon the alleys, which hang over the sea, in a bold romantic manner.

The fathers would show me their flower-garden, and a very pleasant terrace it is; neatly paved with chequered tiles, and interspersed with knots of carnations, in a style as ancient, I should conjecture, as the dominion of the Moors in Portugal. Espaliers of citron and orange cover the walls, and have almost gotten the better of some glaring shell-work, with which a reverend father encrusted them ten or twelve years ago. Shining beads, china plates and saucers turned inside out, compose the chief ornaments of this decoration; I observed the same propensity to shell-work and broken china in a Mr. de Visme, whose quinta at Bemfica eclipses our Clapham and Islington villas in all the attractions of leaden statues, Chinese temples, serpentine rivers, and dusty hermitages.

We returned home before the heat grew quite intolerable, and just in time to go to a breakfast at the Marquis of Penalvas, to which we had been invited the day before yesterday. When once a Portuguese of the first class determines to admit a stranger into the pene-

tralia of his family, he spares no pains to set off all he possesses to the most striking advantage, and offer it to his guest with the most liberal hospitality; you appear to command him, and he everything. Our reception, therefore, was most sumptuous and most cordial.

If we had wished for a concert, the best musicians of the royal chapel were in waiting to perform it; if to examine early editions of the classics or scarce Portuguese authors, the library was open, and the librarian ready to hand and explain to us any article that happened to attract our attention; if to see pictures, the walls of several apartments displayed an interesting collection, both of the Italian and Flemish schools; if conversation, almost every person of literary note in this capital, academicians and artists, were assembled. Supposing the rarest botanical specimens and flowers had been our peculiar taste, some of the most perfect I ever beheld were presented to us; and that nothing in any line might be wanting, the rich grated folding-doors of a chapel were expanded, and an altar splendidly lighted up, seemed to invite those who felt spiritual calls, to indulge themselves.

For my part, the sea breezes having sharpened my temporal appetite, I sat down with great alacrity to breakfast. It was magnificent and well served. I could not help noticing the extreme fineness of the linen, curiously embroidered with arms and flowers, red on a white ground. Superb embossed gilt salvers supported plates of iced fruit, particularly scarlet strawberries, which are uncommon in Portugal, and filled the apartment with fragrance; the more grateful, as it excited, by the strong power of associated ideas, recollections of home and of England.

Much whispering and giggling was going forward in the cool shade of several mysterious chambers, which opened into the saloon where we were at table. These sounds proceeded from the ladies of the family, who, had they been natives of Bagdad or Constantinople, could hardly have remained in a more Asiatic state of seclusion. I was allowed, however, to make my bow to them in their harem itself, which, I was given to understand, I ought to look upon as a most flattering mark of distinction. Who should I find in the midst of the group of senhoras, and seated

like them upon the ground *à la façon de Barbarie*, but the newly-consecrated, and very young-looking Bishop of Algarve, whose small, black, sleek, schoolboyish head and sallow countenance, was overshadowed by an enormous pair of green spectacles. Truth obliges me to confess that the expression which beamed from the eyes under these formidable glasses, did not absolutely partake of the most decent, mild, or apostolic character. In process of time, perhaps, he may acquire that varnish, without which the least holy intentions often miss their aim, the varnish of hypocrisy. I wonder he has not already attained a more conspicuous degree of perfection in this style, having studied under a complete *tartuffe* and jansenistical bigot as ever existed, one of the cock-birds of a nest of imaginary philosophers who are working hard to undo what little good has been done in this country, and laying a mine of ten thousand intrigues to blow up, if they can but contrive it, all genuine sentiments of religion and loyalty.

The old Marquis of Penalva pressed us to stay dinner, which was set out in high order, in a pleasant, shady apartment. Verdeil could

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not resist the temptation; but I was fatigued with the howlings of the night, and the sultriness and bustle of the day, and went home to a quieter party with the Grand Prior and Don Pedro.

In the evening we drove to Marvilla, the neglected garden I have before mentioned, and which commands the broadest expanse of the Tagus, a prospect which recalled to my mind the lake of Geneva, and all that befel me on its banks. You may imagine, then, it tended much more to depress than exhilarate my spirits. I consented, however, to accompany the Grand Prior about the alleys and terraces of this romantic enclosure, the scene of his childhood, and of which he is peculiarly fond. The palace, courts, and fountains are almost in ruins, the parterres of myrtle have shot up into wild bushes covered with blossoms, and the statues are half concealed by jasmine.

Here is a small theatre for operas, and a chapel, not unlike a mosque in shape, and arabesque ornaments, darkly shadowed by Spanish banners, the trophies of the battle of Elvas, gained by an ancestor of the Marialvas.

A long bower of vines, supported by marble

pillars, leads from the palace to the chapel. There is something majestic in this verdant gallery, and the glow of sun-set piercing its foliage, lighted up the wan features of several superannuated servants of the family, who crawled out of their decayed chambers and threw themselves on their knees before the Grand Prior and Don Pedro.

We wandered about this forlorn, abandoned garden, whose stillness equalled that of a Carthusian convent, till dusk, when a refreshing wind having risen, waved the cypresses and scattered the white jasmine flowers over the parterres of myrtle in clouds like snow. Don Pedro filled the carriage with flowery sprays pulled from mutilated statues, and we were all half intoxicated before we reached my habitation with the delicious but overcoming perfume.

LETTER XVIII.

Excursion to Cintra.—Villa of Ramalhaô.—The Garden.—Collares.—Pavilion designed by Pillement.—A convulsive gallop.—Cold weather in July.

July 9th, 1787.

I WAS at the Marialva Palace by nine, and set off from thence with the Marquis for Cintra. Having the command of the Queen's stables, in which are four thousand mules and two thousand horses, he orders as many relays as he pleases, and we changed mules four times in the space of an hour.

A few minutes after ten we were landed at Ramalhaô, a villa, under the pyramidical rocks of Cintra, Signor S. Arriaga was so kind as to lend me a month or two ago, and which I have not had time to visit till to-day. The suite of apartments are spacious and airy, and the views they command of sea and arid country boundless; but unless the heat becomes more violent,

I shall be cooler than I wish in them, as they contain not a chimney except in the kitchen.

I found the garden in excellent order, and flourishing crops of vegetables springing up between rows of orange and citron. Such is the power of the climate, that the gardenias and Cape plants I brought with me from England, mere stumps, are covered with beautiful blossoms. The curled mallows, and some varieties of Indian-corn, sown by my English gardener, have shot up to a strange elevation, and begin already to form shady avenues and fairy forests, where children might play in perfection at landscape-gardening.

After I had passed half-an-hour in looking about me, the Marquis and I got into our chair, and drove to his own villa; a new creation, which has cost him a great many thousand pounds sterling. Five years ago it was a wild hill bestrewn with flints and rocky fragments. At present you find a gay pavilion designed by Pillement, and elegantly decorated; a parterre with statues and fountains, thick alleys of laurel, bay, and laurustine, cascades, arbours, clipped box-trees, and every ornament the Portuguese taste in gardening renders desirable.

We dined at a clean snug inn, situated towards the middle of the village of Cintra. The Queen has lately bestowed this house and a large tract of ground adjoining it, upon the Marquis. From its windows and loggias you look down deep ravines and bold slopes of woods and copses, variegated with mossy stones and ancient decayed chesnuts.

As soon as the sun grew low we went to Collares, and walked on a terrace belonging to M. la Roche, a French merchant, who has shown some glimmering of taste in the laying out of his villa. The groves of pine and chesnut starting from the crevices of rock, and rising one above another to a considerable elevation, give Collares the air of an Alpine village. Innumerable rills, overhung by cork-trees and branching lemons, burst out of ruined walls by the wayside, and dash into marble basins. A favourite attendant of the late king's, who has a very large property in these environs, invited us with much civility and obsequiousness into his garden. I thought myself entering the orchards of Alcinous. The boughs literally bent under loads of fruit; the slightest

shake strewed the ground with plums, oranges, and apricots.

This villa boasts a grand artificial cascade, with tritons and dolphins vomiting torrents of water; but I paid it not half the attention its proprietor expected, and retiring under the shade of the fruit-trees, feasted on the golden apples and purple plums that were rolling about me in such profusion. The Marquis, who shares with most of the Portuguese a remarkable predilection for flowers, filled his carriage with carnations and jasmine. I never saw plants more conspicuous for size and vigour than those which have the luck of being sown in this fortunate soil. The exposition likewise is singularly happy; skreened by sloping hills, and defended from the sea-airs by several miles of thickets and orchards. I felt unwilling to quit a spot so favoured by nature, and M—— flatters himself I shall be tempted to purchase it.

The wind became troublesome as we ascended the hill, crowned by the Marialva villa. The sky was clear and the sun set fiery. The distant convent of Mafra, glowing with ruddy

light, looked like the enchanted palace of a giant, and the surrounding country bleak and barren as if the monster had eaten it desolate. To repose ourselves a little after our rapid excursion we entered the pavilion I told you just now Pillement had designed. It represents a bower of fantastic Indian trees mingling their branches, and discovering between them peeps of a summer sky. From the mouth of a flying dragon depends a magnificent lustre for fifty lights, hung with festoons of brilliant glass, that twinkle like strings of diamonds.

We loitered in this saloon till it was pitch-dark. The pages riding full speed before us with flaming torches, and the wind driving back sparks and smoke full in our faces, I was stunned and bewildered, and experienced, perhaps, the sensations of a novice in sorcery, mounted for the first time behind a witch on a broomstick. In less than an hour we had rattled over twelve miles of rough, disjoined pavement, going up and down the steepest hills in a convulsive gallop, so that I expected every instant to be thrown flat on my nose; but, happily, the mules were picked from perhaps a

hundred, and never stumbled. I found the air on the heights above the Ajueda very keen and piercing.

It sounds strange to be complaining of cold at Lisbon on the ninth of July.

LETTER XIX.

Sympathy between Toads and Old Women.—Palace of Cintra.—Reservoir of Gold and Silver Fish.—Parterre on the summit of a lofty terrace.—Place of confinement of Alphonso the Sixth.—The Chapel.—Barbaric profusion of Gold.—Altar at which Don Sebastian knelt when he received a supernatural warning.—Rooms in preparation for the Queen and the Infantas.—Return to Ramalhaõ.

July 24th, 1787.

THERE exists, I am convinced, a decided sympathy between toads and witch-like old women. Mother Morgan* descended this morning, not into the infernal regions, but into the cellar, and immediately five or six spanking reptiles of this mysterious species waddled around her. She rewarded the confidence the poor things placed in her rather scurvily, and laid three of the fattest sprawling. I saw them lying breathless in the court as I got on horseback; the largest measured seven inches in

* An old English housekeeper.

diameter. Portuguese toads may be more distinguished for size, but are not half so amiably speckled as those we have the happiness to harbour in England.

I was some time hesitating which way I should turn my horse's steps, whether to the Pedra d'os Ovos, or on the other side of the rock to the Peninha, a cell belonging to the Hieronimites, and dependent upon their principal eyry, Nossa Senhora da Penha. Marialva, whom I met with all his train of equerries and picadors coming forth from his villa, decided me not to take a clambering ride, but to accompany him to the palace, the interior of which I had not yet visited.

The Alhambra itself is scarcely more morisco in point of architecture than this confused pile, which seems to grow out of the summit of a rocky eminence, and is broken into a variety of picturesque recesses and projections. It is a thousand pities that they have whitened its venerable walls, stopped up a range of bold arcades, and sliced out one end of the great hall into two or three mean apartments like the dressing-rooms of a theatre. From the windows, which are all in a fantastic oriental style,

crinkled and crankled, and supported by twisted pillars of smooth marble, striking, romantic views of the cliffs and village of Cintra are commanded. Several irregular courts and loggias, formed by the angles of square towers, are enlivened by fountains of marble and gilt bronze, continually pouring forth abundant streams of the purest water.

A sort of reservoir, almost long enough to be styled a canal, is continued the whole length of the great hall, and serves as a paradise for shoals of the largest and most brilliant gold and silver fish I ever set eyes upon. The murmur of the jets-d'eau which rise from this canal, the ripple of the water undulating against steps and slabs of polished marble, the glancing and gleaming of the fish, and the striking contrast of light and shade produced by the intricate labyrinth of arches and columns, combine altogether to form a scene of enchantment such as we sometimes dream of, but hardly suppose is ever realized. There is a sobriety in the hues of the marble, a mysteriousness in the dark recesses seen in perspective, and a solemnity in the deep colour, approaching to blackness, of the water in that part of the reservoir which is

overshadowed by lofty buildings, I cannot help thinking superior to all the flutter and glitter of the most famous Moorish edifices at Granada or Seville.

The flat summit of one of the loftiest terraces, not less than one hundred and fifty feet from the ground, is laid out as a neat parterre, which is spread like an embroidered carpet before the entrance of a huge square tower, almost entirely occupied by a hall encrusted with glistening tiles, and crowned by a most singularly-shaped dome. Amidst the scrolls of arabesque foliage which adorn it, appear the arms of the principal Portuguese nobility. The achievement of the unfortunate house of Tavora is blotted out, and the pannel it occupied left bare.

We had climbed up to this terrace and tower by one of those steep, cork-screw staircases, of which there are numbers in the palace, and which connect with vaulted passages in a secret and suspicious manner. The Marquis pointed out to me the mosaic pavement of a small chamber, fretted and worn away in several places by the steps of Alphonso the Sixth, who

was confined to this narrow space a long series of years.

Descending from it, we looked into the chapel, not less singular in form and construction than the rest of the edifice. The low flat cupola, as well as the intersections of the arches, are much in the style of a mosque; but the barbaric profusion of gold, and still more barbaric paintings with which every soffite and pannel are covered, might almost be supposed the work of Cingalese or Hindostanee artists, and reminded me of those subterraneous pagodas where his Satanic Majesty receives homage under the form of Gumputy or of Boodh.

The original glare of all this strange scenery is greatly subdued by the smoke of lamps, which have been burning for ages before the altar: a mysterious pile of carved work and imagery, in perfect consonance, as to gloom and uncouthness, with every other object in the place. It was whilst kneeling before this very altar that the young, the ardent, the chivalrous Don Sebastian is said to have received a supernatural warning to renounce that fatal African expedition which cost him his crown and

his life, and what an heroic mind holds in far higher estimation, that immortal fame which follows successful achievements.

A something I can hardly describe, an oppressive gloom, seemed to hang over this chapel, which remains very nearly, I should imagine, in the same style it was left by the ill-fated Sebastian. The want of a free circulation of air, and a heavy cloud of incense, affected the nerves of my head so disagreeably that I was glad to move on, and follow the Marquis into the rooms preparing for the Queen and the Infantas. These are airy and well ventilated; but instead of hanging them with rich arras, representing the adventures of knights and worthies, her Majesty's upholsterers are hard at work covering the stout walls with bright silks and satins of the palest and most delicate colours. I saw no furniture worth notice, not a picture or a cabinet: our stay, therefore, as we had nothing to see, was not protracted.

As soon as the Marquis had given some orders, with which his royal mistress had charged him, we returned to Ramalhaô, where Horne and Guildermeester, the Dutch Consul, were

waiting our arrival, and squabbling about insurances, percentages, commissions, and other commercial speculations.

I have been persuading the Marquis to accompany me to-morrow to Guildermeester's: it is the old man's birthday, and he opens his new house with dancing and suppering. We shall have a pretty sample of the factory misses, clerks, and apprentices, some underlings of the *corps diplomatique*, and God knows how many thousand pound weight of Dutch and Hambro' merchants.

LETTER XX.

Grand gala at Court. — Festival in honour of the birthday of Guildermeester.—Mad freaks of a Frenchman.—Unwelcome lights of Truth.—Invective against the English.

July 25th, 1787.

GRAND gala at Court, and the Marquis gone to attend it; for this blessed day not only gave birth to Guildermeester, but to the Princess of Brazil. We went to dine with the Marchioness. A band of regimental music, on their march to Guildermeester, began playing in the court, and drew forth one of those curious swarms of all sexes, ages, and colours, which this beneficent family are so fond of harbouring. Donna Henriquetta was seated on the steps, which lead up to the great pavilion, whispering to some of her favourite attendants, who, like the chorus in an ancient Greek tragedy, were continually giving their opinion of whatever was going forward.

Just as Don Pedro and I were preparing to set off together for the ball at the old consul's, we were agreeably surprised by the arrival of the Marquis, who had escaped from the palace much earlier than he expected. I carried him in my chaise to Horne's, where we drank tea on his terrace, which commands the most romantic view in Cintra; vast sweeps of varied foliage, banks with twisted roots, and trunks of enormous chesnuts, mingled with weeping-willows of the freshest verdure, and citrons clustered with fruit. Above this sylvan scene tower three shattered pinnacles of rock, the middle one diversified by the turrets and walls of Nossa Senhora da Penha, a convent of Jeronimites, frequently concealed in clouds. I leaned against a cork-tree, which spreads its branches almost entirely over the veranda, enjoying the view, and staring idly at the grotesque figures, Dutch, English, and Portuguese, passing along to Guildermeester's; a series sufficiently diversified to have amused me for some time, had not M—— grown impatient and uneasy. His brother-in-law, S—— V——, to whom he has a mortal aversion, having made his appearance, the powers of light and darkness, if personified,

could not exhibit a stronger contrast than these two personages; M—— looking all benignity, and S—— V—— all malevolence. Indeed, if one half of the atrocities* public report attributes to this notorious nobleman be true, I should not wonder at the blackness of revenge and tyranny being so deeply marked in every line of his countenance.

Moving off the first opportunity, we passed through dark and gloomy lanes, admirably calculated for such exploits as I have just alluded to, and were near being jerked into a ditch as we drove to the old consul's door. The space before this new building is in sad disorder. The house has little more than bare walls, and was not very splendidly lighted up.

As for the company, they turned out just what I expected. Madame G——, who is a woman of spirit and discernment, did the honours with the greatest ease, and paid her principal guests the most marked attentions. There is a something pointedly original in all her observations, which pleased me very much. She is not, however, of the merciful tribe, and

* For no light specimen of these atrocities, see Southey's Letters from Spain and Portugal.

joined forces with Verdeil (no foe to a little slashing conversation) in cutting up the factory. M—— handed her in to supper. This part of the entertainment was magnificent. There was a bright illumination, an immense profusion of plate, a striking breadth of table, every delicacy that could be procured, and a dessert-frame, fifty or sixty feet in length, gleaming with burnished figures and vases of silver flowers. I felt no inclination to dance after supper; the music was not inspiring, and the company thrown into the utmost confusion by the mad freaks of a Frenchman, upon whom one of the principal ladies present is supposed for two or three years past to have placed her affections. A *coup de soleil* and a quarrel with his ambassador, Monsieur de Bombelles, it seems had turned the poor fellow's brain: there was no preventing his rushing from room to room with the sputter and eccentricity of a fire-work, now abusing one person, now another, confessing publicly the universal kindness he had received from the lady above hinted at, and the many marks of tender affection a certain Miss W—— had bestowed on him. "Why," said he to the two

heroines, who I am told are not upon the best terms imaginable, "should you squabble and scratch? You are both equally indulgent, and have both rendered me in your turns the happiest mortal in the universe."

Whilst the light of truth was shining upon the bystanders in this very singular manner, I leave you to imagine the awkward surprise of the worthy old husband, and the angry blushes of his spouse and her fair associate. I never beheld a more capital scene. In some of our pantomimes, if I recollect rightly, harlequin applies a touchstone to his adversaries, and by its magic influence draws truth from their mouths in spite of propriety or interest. The lawyer confesses having fingered a bribe, the soldier his flight in the day of battle, and the whining methodistical dowager her frequent recourse to the bottle of inspiration. This wondrous effect seems to have been here realized, and some malicious demon to have possessed the talkative Frenchman, and to have compelled him to disclose the mysteries to which he owes his subsistence. Amongst the harsh truths poured out by this flow of sincerity was a vehement apostrophe to the English

canaille, as he styled them, upon their rank intolerance of all customs except their own, and their ten thousand starch uncharitable prejudices. Mrs. ——, become dauntless through despair, took up the cudgels in this cause most vigorously, compared the chief part of the company to a swarm of venemous insects, unworthy to crawl upon the hem of her really pure, though calumniated garments, and fit to be shaken off with a vengeance the first opportunity.

The Marquis, Don Pedro, and I enjoyed the scene so much, that we stayed later than we intended.

LETTER XXI.

The Queen of Portugal's Chapel.—The Orchestra.—Rehearsal of a Council.—Proposal to visit Mafra.

Ramalhaô, near Cintra, 26th August, 1787.

THE Queen of Portugal's chapel is still the first in Europe, in point of vocal and instrumental excellence; no other establishment of the kind, the papal not excepted, can boast such an assemblage of admirable musicians. Wherever her Majesty moves they follow; when she goes a hawking to Salvaterra, or a health-hunting to the baths of the Caldas. Even in the midst of these wild rocks and mountains, she is surrounded by a bevy of delicate warblers, as plump as quails, and as gurgling and melodious as nightingales. The violins and violoncellos at her Majesty's beck are all of the first order, and in oboe and flute-players her musical menagerie is unrivalled.

The Marquis of M——, as first Lord of the

Bedchamber, Master of the Horse, and, as it were, hereditary prime favourite, enjoys a decided influence over this empire of sweet sounds; and having been so friendly as to impart a share of these musical blessings to me, I have been permitted to avail myself, whenever I please, of a selection from this wonderful band of performers. This very morning, to my shame be it recorded, I remained hour after hour in my newly-arranged pavilion, without reading a word, writing a line, or entering into any conversation. All my faculties were absorbed by the harmony of the wind instruments, stationed at a distance in a thicket of orange and bay trees. It was to no purpose that I tried several times to retire out of the sound—I was as often drawn back as I attempted to snatch myself away. Did I consult the health of my mind, I should dismiss these musicians; their plaintive affecting tones are sure to awaken in my bosom a long train of mournful recollections, and by the force of associated ideas to plunge me into a state of languor and gloom.

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My excellent friend, the Prior of Aviz, per-

formed a real act of friendship, by breaking in almost by force upon my seclusion, and rousing me from my reveries. He insisted upon my accompanying him to the Archbishop's, where the rehearsal of a council to be held in the Queen's presence was going forward, and all the ministers with their assistant under-secretaries assembled. Such congregations are new to the good old Confessor, who has been just pressed into the supreme direction, I might say control, of the Cabinet, much against his will. He knows too well the value of ease and tranquillity not to regret so violent an inroad upon his usual habits of life. We found him, therefore, as might be expected, in a state of turmoil and irritation, flushed up to the very forehead with a ruddy tint, which was highly contrasted by his flowing white flannel garments. These garments he frequently shook and crumpled, and more than once did he strike with vehemence against his portly paunch, which, though he declared it had waited an hour longer than customary for its wonted replenishment, sounded by no means so hollow as an empty tub. The old saying, that "*fat paunches make lean pates*," could not,

however, be applied to him; he was so gracious and confidential as to give me a summary of what had been represented to him from the different departments of state, with great perspicuity and acuteness.

Notwithstanding the interest this singular communication ought to have excited, I paid it not half the attention it deserved. The impression I had received in the morning, from the music of Haydn and Jomelli, still lingered about me. The Grand Prior, finding politics could not shake them off, consulted with his nephew, who happened to be just by in the Queen's apartment, and returned with a proposal, that as I had long expressed a wish to see Mafra, we should put this scheme in execution to-morrow. It was settled, therefore, that to-morrow we should set off.

LETTER XXII.

Road to Mafra.—Distant view of the Convent.—Its vast fronts.—General magnificence of the Edifice.—The Church.—The High Altar.—Eve of the Festival of St. Augustine.—The collateral Chapels.—The Sacristy.——The Abbot of the Convent.—The Library.—View from the Convent-roof.—Chime of Bells.—House of the Capitan Mor.—Dinner.—Vespers.—Awful sound of the Organs.—The Palace.—Return to the Convent.—Inquisitive crowd.—The Garden.—Matins.—A Procession.—The Hall de Profundis.—Solemn Repast.—Supper at the Capitan Mor's.

August 27th, 1787.

We got into the carriage at nine, in spite of the wind, which blew full in our faces. The distance from the villa I inhabit to this stupendous convent is about fourteen English miles, and the road, which by good-luck has been lately mended, conducted across a parched, open country, thinly scattered with windmills and villages. The retrospect on the woody slopes and pointed rocks of Cintra is pleasant

enough; but when you look forward, nothing can be more bleak or barren than the prospect. Thanks to relays of mules, we advanced, full speed, and in less than an hour and a quarter found ourselves under a strong wall which winds boldly across the hills, and incloses the park of Mafra.

We now caught a glimpse of the marble towers and dome of the convent, relieved by an azure expanse of ocean, rising above the brow of heathy eminences, diversified here and there by the bushy heads of Italian pines and the tall spires of cypress. The roofs of the edifice were not yet visible, and we continued some time winding about the undulating acclivities in the park before they were discovered. A detachment of lay-brothers were waiting to open the gates of the royal inclosure, sadly blackened by a fire, which about a month ago consumed a great part of its wood and verdure. Our approach spread a terrible alarm among the herds of deer, which were peacefully browsing on a slope rather greener than those in its neighbourhood. Off they scudded and took refuge in a thicket of half-burnt pines.

After coasting the wall of the great garden, we turned suddenly the corner, and discovered one of the vast fronts of the convent, appearing like a street of palaces. I cannot pretend that the style of the building is such as a lover of pure Grecian architecture would approve; the windows and doors are many of them fantastically shaped, but at least well proportioned.

I was admiring their ample range as we drove rapidly along, when, upon wheeling round the lofty square pavilion which flanks the edifice, the grand façade, extending above eight hundred feet, opened to my view. The centre is formed by the porticoes of the church richly adorned with columns, niches, and bas-reliefs of marble. On each side two towers, somewhat resembling those of St. Paul's in London, rise to the height of near two hundred feet, and, joining on to the enormous *corps de logis*, the palace terminates to the right and left by its stately pavilions. These towers are light, airy, and clustered with pillars, remarkably beautiful; but their form in general borders too much on a sort of pagoda-ish style, and wants solemnity. They contain many

bells of the largest dimensions, and a famous chime which cost several hundred thousand crusadoes, and which was set playing the moment our arrival was notified. The platform and flight of steps before the columned entrance of the church is strikingly grand; and the dome, which lifts itself up so proudly above the pediment of the portico, merits praise for its lightness and elegance.

My eyes ranged along the vast extent of palace on each side till they were tired, and I was glad to turn them from the glare of marble and confusion of sculptured ornaments to the blue expanse of the distant ocean. Before the front of this colossal structure a wide level of space extends itself, at the extremity of which several white houses lie dispersed. Though these buildings are by no means inconsiderable, they appear, when contrasted with the immense pile in the neighbourhood, like the booths of workmen, for such I took them upon my first survey, and upon a nearer approach was quite surprised at their real dimensions.

Few objects render the prospect from the platform of Mafra, interesting. You look over

the roofs of an indifferent village and the summits of sandy acclivities, backed by a boundless stretch of sea. On the left, your view is terminated by the craggy mountains of Cintra; to the right, a forest of pines in the Viscount of Ponte de Lima's extensive garden, affords the eye some small refreshment.

To skreen ourselves from the sun, which darted powerfully on our heads, we entered the church, passing through its magnificent portico, which reminded me not a little of the entrance of St. Peter's; and is crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs, carved with infinite delicacy.

The first *coup-d'œil* of the church is very imposing. The high altar, adorned with two majestic columns of reddish variegated marble, each, a single block, above thirty feet in height, immediately fixes the eye. Trevisani has painted the altar-piece in a masterly manner. It represents St. Anthony in the ecstasy of beholding the infant Jesus descending into his cell amidst an effulgence of glory.

To-morrow being the festival of St. Augustine, whose followers are the actual possessors of this monastery, all the golden candelabra

were displayed, and tapers lighted. After pausing a few minutes in the midst of this bright illumination, we visited the collateral chapels, each enriched with highly finished bassi-relievi and stately portals of black and yellow marble, richly veined, and so highly polished as to reflect objects like a mirror. Never did I behold such an assemblage of beautiful marble as gleamed above, below, and around us. The pavement, the vaulted ceiling, the dome, and even the topmost lantern, is encrusted with the same costly and durable materials. Roses of white marble and wreaths of palm-branches, most exquisitely sculptured, enrich every part of the edifice. I never saw Corinthian capitals better modelled, or executed with more precision and sharpness, than those of the columns which support the nave.

Having satisfied our curiosity by examining the various ornaments of the altars, we followed our conductor through a long coved gallery into the sacristy, a magnificent vaulted hall, panelled with some beautiful varieties of alabaster and porphyry, and carpeted, as well as a chapel adjoining it, in a style of the utmost magnifi-

cence. We traversed several more halls and chapels, adorned with equal splendour, till we were fatigued and bewildered like errant knights in the mazes of an enchanted palace.

I began to think there was no end to these spacious apartments. The monk who preceded us, a good-natured, slobbering greybeard, taking for granted that I could not understand a syllable of his language, attempted to explain the objects which presented themselves by signs, and would hardly believe his ears, when I asked him in good Portuguese when we should have done with chapels and sacristies. The old fellow seemed vastly delighted with the Meninos, as he called Don Pedro and me; and to give our young legs an opportunity of stretching themselves, trotted along with such expedition that the Marquis and Verdeil wished him in purgatory. To be sure, we advanced at a most rapid rate, striding from one end to the other of a dormitory, six hundred feet in length, in a minute or two. These vast corridors, and the cells with which they communicate, three hundred in number, are all arched in the most sumptuous and solid manner. Every cell, or rather chamber, for they are sufficiently spa-

cious, lofty, and well lighted, to merit that appellation, is furnished with tables and cabinets of Brazil-wood.

Just as we entered the library, the Abbot of the convent, dressed in his ceremonial habit, advanced to bid us welcome, and invite us to dine with him to-morrow, St. Augustine's day, in the refectory; which it seems is a mighty compliment. We thought proper, however, to decline the honour, being aware that, to enjoy it, we must sacrifice at least two hours of our time, and be half parboiled by the steam of huge roasted calves, turkeys, and gruntlings, which had long been fattening, no doubt, for this solemn occasion.

The library is of a prodigious length, not less than three hundred feet; the arched roof of a pleasing form, beautifully stuccoed, and the pavement of red and white marble. Much cannot be said in praise of the cases in which the books are to be arranged. They are clumsily designed, coarsely executed, and darkened by a gallery which projects into the room in a very awkward manner. The collection, which consists of above sixty thousand volumes, is locked up at present in a suite of apartments which

opens into the library. Several well preserved and richly illuminated first editions of the Greek and Roman classics were handed to me by the father librarian; but my nimble conductor would not allow me much time to examine them. He set off full speed, and, ascending a winding staircase, led us out upon the roof of the convent and palace, which form a broad, smooth terrace, bounded by a magnificent balustrade, unincumbered by chimneys, and commanding a bird's-eye view of the courts and garden.

From this elevation the whole plan of the edifice may be comprehended at a glance. In the centre rises the dome, like a beautiful temple from the spacious walks of a royal garden. It is infinitely superior, in point of design, to the rest of the edifice, and may certainly be reckoned among the lightest and best proportioned in Europe. Don Pedro and Monsieur Verdeil proposed scaling a ladder which leads up to the lantern, but I begged to be excused accompanying them, and amused myself during their absence with ranging about the extensive loggias, now and then venturing a look down on the courts and parterres so far below; but

oftener enjoying the prospect of the towers shining bright in the sunbeams, and the azure bloom of the distant sea. A fresh balsamic air wafted from the orchards of citron and orange, fanned me as I rested on the steps of the dome, and tempered the warmth of the glowing æther.

But I was soon driven from this cloudless, peaceful situation, by a confounded jingle of all the bells; then followed a most complicated sonata, banged off on the chimes by a great proficient. The Marquis, who had climbed up on purpose to enjoy this cataract of what some persons call melodious sounds at its fountain-head, would have me approach to examine the mechanism, and I was half stunned. I know very little indeed about chimes and clocks, and am quite at a loss for amusement in a belfry. My friend, who inherits a mechanical turn from his father, the renowned patron of clocks and time-pieces, investigated every wheel with minute attention.

His survey finished, we descended innumerable stairs, and retired to the Capitan Mor's, whose jurisdiction extends over the park and district of Mafra. He has seven or eight

thousand crusadoes a year, and his habitation wears every appearance of comfort and opulence. The floors are covered with mats of the finest texture, the doors hung with red damask curtains, and our beds, quite new for the occasion, spread with satin coverlids richly embroidered and fringed. We had a most luxurious repast, and a better dessert than even the monks could have given us—the Capitan Mor taking the dishes from his long train of servants, and placing them himself on the table, quite in the feudal style.

After coffee we hurried to vespers in the great church of the convent, and advancing between the range of illuminated chapels, took our places in the royal tribune. We were no sooner seated than the monks entered in procession, preceding their abbot, who ascended his throne, having a row of sacristans at his feet and canons on his right hand, in their cloth of gold embroidered vestments. The service was chaunted with the most imposing solemnity to the awful sound of organs, for there are no fewer than six in the church, all of an enormous size.

When it was ended, being once more laid

hold of by the nimble lay-brother, we were conducted up a magnificent staircase into the palace. The suite extends seven or eight hundred feet, and the almost endless succession of lofty doors seen in perspective, strikes with astonishment; but we were soon weary of being merely astonished, and agreed to pronounce the apartments the dullest and most comfortless we had ever beheld; there is no variety in their shape, and little in their dimensions. The furniture being all locked up at Lisbon, a naked sameness universally prevails; not a niche, not a cornice, not a curved moulding breaks the tedious uniformity of dead white walls.

I was glad to return to the convent and refresh my eyes with the sight of marble pillars, and my feet by treading on Persian carpets. We were followed wherever we moved, into every cell, chapel, hall, passage, or sacristy, by a strange medley of inquisitive monks, sacristans, lay-brothers, corregidors, village-curates, and country beaux with long rapiers and pigtails. If I happened to ask a question, half-a-dozen all at once poked their necks out to answer it, like turkey-polts when addressed in their na-

tive hobble-gobble dialect. The Marquis was quite sick of being trotted after in this tumultuous manner, and tried several times to leave the crowd behind him, by taking sudden turns; but sticking close to our heels, it baffled all his endeavours, and increased to such a degree, that we seemed to have swept the whole convent and village of their inhabitants, and to draw them after us by one of those supernatural attractions we read of in tales and romances.

At length, perceiving a large door open into the garden, we bolted out, and striking into a labyrinth of myrtles and laurels, got rid of our pursuers. The garden, which is about a mile and a half in circumference, contains, besides wild thickets of pine and bay-trees, several orchards of lemon and orange, and two or three parterres more filled with weeds than flowers. I was much disgusted at finding this beautiful inclosure so wretchedly neglected, and its luxuriant plants withering away for want of being properly watered.

You may suppose, that after adding a walk in the principal alleys of the garden to our other peregrinations, we began to find our-

selves somewhat fatigued, and were not sorry to repose ourselves in the Abbot's apartment till we were summoned once more to our tribune to hear matins performed. It was growing dark, and the innumerable tapers burning before the altars and in every part of the church, began to diffuse a mysterious light. The organs joined again in full accord, the long series of monks and novices entered with slow and solemn steps, and the Abbot resumed his throne with the same pomp as at vespers. The Marquis began muttering his orisons, the Grand Prior to recite his breviary, and I to fall into a profound reverie, which lasted as long as the service, that is to say above two hours. Verdeil, ready to expire with ennui, could not help leaving the tribune and the cloud of incense which filled the choir, to breathe a freer air in the body of the church and its adjoining chapels.

It was almost nine when the monks, after chaunting a most solemn and sonorous hymn in praise of their venerable father, Saint Augustine, quitted the choir. We followed their procession through lofty chapels and arched cloisters, which by a glimmering light appeared

to have neither roof nor termination, till it entered an octagon forty feet in diameter, with fountains in the four principal angles. The monks, after dispersing to wash their hands at the several fountains, again resumed their order, and passed two-and-two under a portal thirty feet high into a vast hall, communicating with their refectory by another portal of the same lofty dimensions. Here the procession made a pause, for this chamber is consecrated to the remembrance of the departed, and styled the Hall de Profundis. Before every repast, the monks standing round it in solemn ranks, silently revolve in their minds the precariousness of our frail existence, and offer up prayers for the salvation of their predecessors. I could not help being struck with awe when I beheld by the glow of flaming lamps, so many venerable figures in their black and white habits bending their eyes on the pavement, and absorbed in the most interesting and gloomy of meditations.

The moment allotted to this solemn supplication being passed, every one took his place at the long tables in the refectory, which are made of Brazil-wood, and covered with the

whitest linen. Each monk had his glass caraffe of water and wine, his plate of apples and salad set before him; neither fish nor flesh were served up, the vigil of St. Augustine's day being observed as a fast with the utmost strictness.

To enjoy at a glance this singular and majestic spectacle, we retreated to a vestibule preceding the octagon, and from thence looked through all the portals down the long row of lamps into the refectory, which, owing to its vast length of full two hundred feet, seemed ending in a point. After remaining a few minutes to enjoy this perspective, four monks advanced with torches to light us out of the convent, and bid us good-night with many bows and genuflections.

Our supper at the Capitan Mor's was very cheerful. We sat up late, notwithstanding our fatigue, talking over the variety of objects that had passed before our eyes in so short a space of time, the crowd of grotesque figures which had stuck to our heels so long and so closely, and the awkward vivacity of the lay-brother.

LETTER XXIII.

High mass.—Garden of the Viscount Ponte de Lima.—Leave Mafra.—An accident.—Return to Cintra.—My saloon.—Beautiful view from it.

August 28th, 1787.

I WAS half asleep, half awake, when the sonorous bells of the convent struck my ears. The Marquis and Don Pedro's voices in earnest conversation with the Capitan Mor in the adjoining chamber, completely roused me. We swallowed our coffee in haste; the Grand Prior reluctantly left his pillow, and accompanied us to high mass. The monks once more exerted their efforts to prevail on us to dine with them; but we remained inflexible, and to avoid their importunities hastened away, as soon as mass was ended, to the Viscount Ponte de Lima's gardens, where the deep shade of the bay and ilex skreened us from the excessive heat of the sun.

The Marquis, seating himself by me near one

of those clear and copious fountains with which this magnificent Italian-looking garden is refreshed and enlivened, entered into a most serious and semi-official discourse about my stay in Portugal, and the means which were projecting in a very high quarter to render it not only pleasant to myself, but of some importance to many others.

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I felt relieved when the appearance of Don Pedro and his uncle, who had been walking to the end of an immensely long avenue of pines, warded off a conversation that began to press hard upon me. We returned altogether to the Capitan Mor's, and found dinner ready.

Both Don Pedro and myself were sorry to leave Mafra, and should have had no objection to another race along the cloisters and dormitories with the lay-brother. The evening was bright and clear, and the azure tints of the distant sea inexpressibly lovely. We drove with a tumultuous rapidity over the rough-paved roads, that the Marquis and I could hardly hear a word we said to each other. Don Pedro had mounted his horse. Verdeil, who preceded us in the carinho, seemed to

outstrip the winds. His mule, one of the most fiery and gigantic of her species, excited by repeated floggings and the shout of a hulking Portuguese postilion, perched up behind the carriage, galloped at an ungovernable rate; and at about a league from the rocks of Cintra, thought proper to jerk out its drivers into the midst of some bushes at the foot of a lofty bank, nearly perpendicular, where they still remained sprawling when we passed by.

Verdeil hobbled up to us, and pointed to the carinho in the ditch below. Except a slight contusion in the knee, he had received no hurt. I exclaimed immediately, that his escape was miraculous, and that, doubtless, St. Anthony had some hand in it. My friend, who has always the horrors of heresy before his eyes, whispered me that the devil had saved him this time, but might not be so favourably disposed another.

It was not half-past five, when we reached Cintra. The Marchioness, the Abade, and the children, were waiting our arrival.

Feeling my head in a whirl, and my ideas as much jolted and jumbled as my body, I returned home just before it fell dark, to

enjoy a few hours of uninterrupted calm. The scenery of my ample saloon, its air of seclusion, its silence, seemed to breathe a momentary tranquillity over my spirits. The mat smoothly laid down, and formed of the finest and most glossy straw, assumed by candlelight a delightful, soft, and harmonious colour. It looked so cool and glistening that I stretched myself upon it. There did I lie supine, contemplating the serene summer-sky, and the moon rising slowly from behind the brow of a shrubby hill. A faint breeze blowing aside the curtains, discovered the summit of the woods in the garden, and beyond, a wide expanse of country, terminated by plains of sea and hazy promontories.

LETTER XXIV.

A saloon in the highest style of oriental decoration.—Amusing stories of King John the Fifth and his recluses.—Cheerful funeral.—Refreshing ramble to the heights of Penha Verde.

August 29th, 1787.

It was furiously hot, and I trifled away the whole morning in my pavilion, surrounded by fidalgos in flowered bed-gowns, and musicians in violet-coloured accoutrements, with broad straw-hats, like bonzes or talapoins, looking as sunburnt, vacant, and listless, as the inhabitants of Ormus or Bengal; so that my company as well as my apartment wore the most decided oriental appearance: the divan raised a few inches above the floor, the gilt trellis-work of the windows, and the pellucid streams of water rising from a tank immediately beneath them, supplied in endless succession by springs from the native rock.

An agreeable variety prevails in my asiatic saloon; half its curtains admit no light, and display the richest folds; the other half are transparent, and cast a mild glow on the mat and sofas. Large clear mirrors multiply this profusion of drapery, and several of my guests seemed never tired of running from corner to corner, to view the different groups of objects reflected on all sides in the most unexpected directions, as if they fancied themselves admitted by enchantment to peep into a labyrinth of magic chambers.

One of the party, a very shrewd old Italian priest, who had left his native land before the too-famous earthquake shook more than the half of Lisbon to its foundations, told me he remembered an apartment a good deal in this style, that is to say, bedecked with mirrors and curtains, in a sort of fairy palace communicating with the Nunnery of Odivellas, so famous for the pious retirement of that paragon of splendour and holiness, King John the Fifth. These were delightful days for the monarch and the fair companions of his devotions.

"Oh!" said the old priest very judiciously, "of what avail is the finest cage without birds

to enliven it? Had you but heard the celestial harmony of King John's recluses, you would never have sat down contented in your fine tent with the squalling of sopranos and the grumbling of bass-viols. The silver, virgin tones I allude to, 'proceeding from the holy recess into which no other male mortal except the monarch, was ever allowed to penetrate, had an effect I still remember with ecstasy, though at the distance of so many years. Four of our finest singers, two from Venice and two from Naples, attracted by a truly regal munificence, added all that the most consummate taste and science could give to the best voices in Portugal; the result was perfection."

Aguilar, who came to dine with us, and whose mother, when in the bloom of youth and beauty, had been not unfrequently invited to act the part of perhaps more than audience at these edifying parties, confirmed all the wonders the old italian narrated, and added not a few of the same gold and ruby colour in a strain so extravagantly enthusiastic, that were I to repeat even half the glittering anecdotes he favoured me with, upon the subject of Don John the Fifth's unbounded fervour and magni-

ficence, your imagination would be completely dazzled.

Just as we had removed from the dinner to the dessert-table, which was spread out upon a terrace fronting the principal alley of the gardens, entered the abade Xavier, in full cry, with a rapturous story of the conversion of an old consumptive englishwoman, who, it seems, finding herself upon the eve of departure, had called for a priest, to whom she might confess, and abjure her errors of every description. Happening to lodge at the Cintra inn, kept by a most flaming Irish Catholic, her commendable desires were speedily complied with, and Mascarenhas and Acciaoli, and two or three other priests and monsignors, summoned to further the good work.

"Great," said the abade, "are our rejoicings upon the occasion. This very evening the aged innocent is to be buried in triumph: Marialva, San Lorenzo, Asseca, and several more of the principal nobility are already assembled to grace the festival; suppose you were to come with me and join the procession?"

"With all my heart," did I reply; "although I have no great taste for funerals, so

gay a one as this you talk of may form an exception."

Off we set, driving as fast as most excellent mules could carry us, lest we should come too late for the entertainment. A great mob was assembled before the door. At one of the windows stood the grand prior, looking as if he wished himself a thousand leagues away, and reciting his breviary. I went up-stairs, and was immediately surrounded by the old conde de San Lorenzo and other believers, overflowing with congratulations. Mascarenhas, one of the soundest limbs of the patriarchal establishment, a capital devotee and seraphic doctor, was introduced to me. Acciaoli, whom I was before acquainted with, skipped about the room, rubbing his hands for joy, with a cunning leer on his jovial countenance, and snapping his fingers at Satan, as much as to say, "I don't care a d—n for you. We have got one at least safe out of your clutches, and clear at this very moment of the smoke of your cauldron."

There was such a bustle in the interior apartment, where the wretched corpse was deposited, such a chaunting and praying, for not a

tongue was idle, that my head swam round, and I took refuge by the grand prior. He by no means relished the party, and kept shrugging up his shoulders, and saying that it was very edifying—very edifying indeed, and that Acciaoli had been extremely alert, extremely active, and deserved great commendation, but that so much fuss might as well have been spared.

By some hints that dropped, I won't say from whom, I discovered the innocent now on the high road to eternal felicity by no means to have suffered the cup of joy to pass by untasted in this existence, and to have lived many years on a very easy footing, not only with a stout English bachelor, but with several others, married and unmarried, of his particular acquaintance. However, she had taken a sudden tack upon finding herself driven apace down the tide of a rapid consumption, and had been fairly towed into port by the joint efforts of the Irish hostess and the monsignori Mascarenhas and Acciaoli.

"Thrice happy englishwoman," exclaimed M—a, "what luck is thine! In the next world immediate admission to paradise, and in this

thy body will have the proud distinction of being borne to the grave by men of the highest rank.—Was there ever such felicity?"

The arrival of a band of priests and sacristans, with tapers lighted and cross erected, called us to the scene of action. The procession being marshalled, the corpse, dressed in virgin-white, lying snug in a sort of rose-coloured bandbox with six silvered handles, was brought forth. M—, who abhors the sight of a dead body, reddened up to his ears, and would have given a good sum to make an honourable retreat; but no retreat could now have been made consistent with piety: he was obliged to conquer his disgust and take a handle of the bier. Another was placed in the murderous gripe of the notorious San Vicente; another fell to the poor old snuffling conde de San Lorenzo; a fourth to the viscount d'Asseca, a mighty simple-looking young gentleman; the fifth and sixth were allotted to the Capitaô Mor of Cintra, and to the judge, a gaunt fellow with a hang-dog countenance.

No sooner did the grand prior catch sight of the ghastly visage of the dead body as it was being conveyed down-stairs in the manner

I have recited, than he made an attempt to move on, and precede instead of following the procession; but Acciaoli, who acted as master of the ceremonies, would not let him off so easily: he allotted him the post of honour immediately at the head of the corpse, and placed himself at his left hand, giving the right to Mascarenhas. All the bells of Cintra struck up a cheerful peal, and to their merry jinglings we hurried along through a dense cloud of dust, a rabble of children frolicking on either side, and their grandmothers hobbling after, telling their beads, and grinning from ear to ear at this triumph over the prince of darkness.

Happily the way to the church was not long, or the dust would have choked us. The grand prior kept his mouth close not to admit a particle of it, but Acciaoli and his colleague were too full of their fortunate exploit not to chatter incessantly. Poor old San Lorenzo, who is fat, squat, and pursy, gasping for breath, stopped several times to rest on his journey. Marialva, whom disgust rendered heartily fatigued with his burthen, was very glad likewise to make a pause or two.

We found all the altars in the church blazing

with lights, the grave gaping for its immaculate inhabitant, and a numerous detachment of priests and choristers waiting to receive the procession. The moment it entered, the same hymn which is sung at the interment of babes and sucklings burst forth from a hundred youthful voices, incense arose in clouds, and joy and gladness shone in the eyes of the whole congregation.

A murmur of applause and congratulation went round anew, those whom it most concerned receiving with great affability and meekness the compliments of the occasion. Old San Lorenzo, waddling up to the grand prior, hugged him in his arms, and strewing him all over with snuff, set him violently a-sneezing. San Vicente, as soon as the Innocent was safely deposited, retired in a sort of dudgeon, being never rightly at ease in the presence of his brother-in-law Marialva. As for the latter warm-hearted nobleman, exultation and triumph carried him beyond all bounds of decorum. He scoffed bitterly at heretics, represented in their true colours the actual happiness of the convert, and just as we left the church, cried out loud enough for all those

who were near to have heard him, "*Elle se f——iche de nous tous à présent.*"

Their pious toil being ended, Mascarenhas and Acciaoli accompanied us to the heights of Penha Verde, to breathe a fresh air under the odoriferous pines; then, returning in our company to Ramalhaô, partook of a nice collation of iced fruit and sweetmeats, and concluded the evening with much gratifying discourse about the lively scene we had just witnessed.

LETTER XXV.

Anecdotes of the Conde de San Lorenzo.—Visit to Mrs. Guildermeester. — Toads active, and toads passive.— The old Consul and his tray of jewels.

THE principal personages who had so piously distinguished themselves yesterday dined with me this blessed afternoon. Old San Lorenzo has a prodigious memory and a warm imagination, rendered still more glowing by a slight touch of madness. He appears perfectly well acquainted with the general politics of Europe, and though never beyond the limits of Portugal, gave so circumstantial and plausible a detail of what occurred, and of the part he himself acted at the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, that I was completely his dupe, and believed, until I was let into the secret, that he had actually witnessed what he only dreamt of. Notwithstanding the high favour he enjoyed with the infante Don Pedro, Pombal cast

him into a dungeon with the other victims of the Aveiro conspiracy, and for eighteen most melancholy years was his active mind reduced to prey upon itself for sustenance.

Upon the present queen's accession he was released, and found his intimate friend the Infante sharing the throne; but thinking himself somewhat coolly received and shabbily neglected, he threw the key of chamberlain which was sent him into a place of less dignity than convenience, and retired to the convent of the Necessidades. No means, I have been assured, were left untried by the king to soothe and flatter him; but they all proved fruitless. Since this period, though he quitted the convent, he has never appeared at court, and has refused all employment. Devotion now absorbs his entire soul. Except when the chord of imprisonment and Pombal is touched upon, he is calm and reasonable. I found him extremely so to-day, and full of the most instructive and amusing anecdote.

Coffee over, my company having stretched themselves out at full-length most comfortably, some on the mat and some on the sofas, to recruit their spirits I suppose, after the pious

toils and enthusiastic procession of the day before, I prevailed upon Marialva to escort me to Mrs. Guildermeester's, whom we found in a vast but dingy saloon, her toads squatting around her. She gave us some excellent tea, and a plain sensible loaf of brown bread, accompanied by delicious butter, just fresh from a genuine dutch dairy, conducted upon the most immaculate dutch principles. Donna Genuefa, the toad-passive in waiting, is a little jossish old woman, with a head as round as a humming-top, and a large placid lip, very smiling and good-natured. Miss Coster, the toad-active, has been rather pretty a few years ago, makes tea with decorum, shuts doors and opens windows with judgment, and has a good deal to say for herself when allowed to sit still on her chair.

We had scarcely begun complimenting the mistress of the house upon the complete success of her cow-establishment, when the old consul her spouse entered, with many bows and salutations, bearing a huge japan tray, upon which was spread out in glittering profusion an ample treasure, both of rough and well-lapidated brilliants, the fruits of his famous and most lucra-

tive contract in the days of Pombal. Some of the largest diamonds, in superb though heavy dutch or german settings, he eagerly desired Marialva would recommend to the attention of the queen, and whispered in my ear that he hoped I also would speak a good word for him. I remained as deaf as an adder, and the Marquis as blind as a beetle, to the splendour of the display; so he returned once more to his interior cabinet, with all his hopes out of blossom, and we moved off.

Evening was drawing on, and a drizzling mist overspreading the crags of Cintra. It did not, however, prevent us from going to Mr. Horne's. We passed under arching elms and chesnuts, whose moistened foliage exhaled a fresh woody odour. High above the vapours, which were rolling away just as we emerged from the shady avenue, appeared the turret of the Convent of the Penha, faintly tinted by the last rays of the sun, and looking down, like the ark on Mount Ararat, on a sea of undulating clouds.

At Horne's, Aguilar, Bezerra, and the usual set were assembled. The Marquis, as soon as he had made his condescending bows to the right

and left, retired to his villa, and I took Horne in my chaise to Mrs. Staits, a little slender-waisted, wild-eyed woman, by no means unpleasing or flinty-hearted. It was her birthday, and she had congregated most of the English at Cintra, in a damp garden about seventy feet long by thirty-two, illuminated by thirty or forty lanterns. Mrs. Guildermeester was there, covered with diamonds, and sparkling like a star in the midst of this murky atmosphere. We had a cold funereal supper, under a low tent in imitation of a grotto.

Mrs. Staits' well-disposed, easy-tempered husband placed me next Mrs. Guildermeester, who amused herself tolerably well at the expense of the entertainment. The dingy, subterraneous appearance of the booth, the wan light of the lanterns sparingly scattered along it, and the fragrance of a dish of rather mature prawns placed under my nose, seized me with the idea of being dead and buried. "Alas!" said I to my fair neighbour, "it is all over with us now, and this our first banquet in the infernal regions; we are all equal and jumbled together. There sits the pious presbyterian Mrs. Fussock, with that bridling miss her

daughter, and close to them those adulterous doves, Mr. —— and his sultana. Here am I, miserable sinner, right opposite your righteous and much-enduring spouse; a little lower our kind host, that pattern of conjugal meekness and resignation. Hark! don't you hear a lumbering noise? They are letting down a cargo of heavy bodies into a neighbouring tomb."

In this strain did we continue till the subject was exhausted, and it was time to take our departure.

LETTER XXVI.

Expected arrival at Cintra of the Queen and suite.—Duke d'Alafoins.—Excursion to a rustic Fair.—Revels of the Peasantry.—Night-scene at the Marialva Villa.

Sept. 10th, 1787.

ADIEU to he tranquillity of Cintra, we shall soon have nothing but hubbub and confusion. The queen is on the point of arriving with all her maids of honour, secretaries of state, dwarfs, negresses and horses, white, black, and pie-bald. Half the quintas around will be dried up, military possession having been taken of the aqueducts, and their waters diverted into new channels for the use of an encampment.

I was walking in a long arched bower of citron-trees, when M—— appeared at the end of the avenue, accompanied by the duke d'Alafoins. This is the identical personage well-known in every part of Europe by the appel-

lation of Duke of Braganza. He has no right, however, to wear that illustrious title, which is merged in the crown. Were he called Duchess Dowager, of anything you please, I think nobody would dispute the propriety of his style, he being so like an old lady of the bed-chamber, so fiddle-faddle and so coquettish. He had put on rouge and patches, and though he has seen seventy winters, contrived to turn on his heel and glide about with juvenile agility.

I was much surprised at the ease of his motions, having been told that he was a martyr to the gout. After lisping french with a most refined accent, complaining of the sun, and the roads, and the state of architecture, he departed, (thank heaven!) to mark out a spot for the encampment of the cavalry, which are to guard the queen's sacred person during her residence in these mountains. M—— was in duty bound to accompany him; but left his son and his nephews, the heirs of the House of Tancos, to dine with me.

In the evening, Verdeil, tired with sauntering about the verandas, proposed a ride to a neighbouring village, where there was a fair.

He and Don Pedro mounted their horses, and preceded the young Tancos and me in a garden-chair, drawn by a most resolute mule. The roads are abominable, and lay partly along the sloping base of the Cintra mountains, which in the spring, no doubt, are clothed with a tolerable verdure, but at this season every blade of grass is parched and withered. Our carriage-wheels, as we drove sideling along these slippery declivities, pressed forth the odour of innumerable aromatic herbs, half pulverized. Thicknesse perhaps would have said, in his original quaint style, that nature was treating us with a pinch of her best cephalic. No snuff, indeed, ever threw me into a more violent fit of sneezing.

I could hardly keep up my head when we arrived at the fair, which is held on a pleasant lawn, bounded on one side by the picturesque buildings of a convent of Hieronimites, and on the other by rocky hills, shattered into a variety of uncouth romantic forms; one cliff in particular, called the Pedra d'os Ovos, terminated by a cross, crowns the assemblage, and exhibits a very grotesque appearance. Behind the convent a thick shrubbery of olives, ilex,

and citron, fills up a small valley refreshed by fountains, whose clear waters are conducted through several cloisters and gardens, surrounded by low marble columns, supporting fretted arches in the morisco style.

The peasants assembled at the fair were scattered over the lawn; some conversing with the monks, others half intoxicated, sliding off their donkies and sprawling upon the ground; others bargaining for silk-nets and spangled rings, to bestow on their mistresses. The monks, who were busily employed in administering all sorts of consolations, spiritual and temporal, according to their respective ages and vocations, happily paid us no kind of attention, so we escaped being stuffed with sweetmeats, and worried with compliments.

At sunset we returned to Ramalhaô, and drank tea in its lantern-like saloon, in which are no less than eleven glazed doors and windows of large dimensions. The winds were still; the air balsamic; and the sky of so soft an azure that we could not remain with patience under any other canopy, but stept once more into our curricles and drove as far as the

Dutch consul's new building, by the mingled light of innumerable stars.

It was after ten when we got back to the Marialva villa, and long before we reached it, we heard the plaintive tones of voices and wind instruments issuing from the thickets. On the margin of the principal basin sat the marchioness and Donna Henriquetta, and a numerous group of their female attendants, many of them most graceful figures, and listening with all their hearts and souls to the rehearsal of some very delightful music with which her majesty is to be serenaded a few evenings hence.

It was one of those serene and genial nights when music acquires a double charm, and opens the heart to tender, though melancholy impressions. Not a leaf rustled, not a breath of wind disturbed the clear flame of the lights which had been placed near the fountains, and which just served to make them visible. The waters, flowing in rills round the roots of the lemon-trees, formed a rippling murmur; and in the pauses of the concert, no other sound except some very faint whisperings was to be

distinguished, so that the enchantment of climate, music, and mystery, all contributed to throw my mind into a sort of trance from which I was not roused again without a degree of painful reluctance.

LETTER XXVII.

Curious scene in the interior of the palace of Cintra.—Singular invitation.—Dinner with the Archbishop Confessor.—Hilarity and shrewd remarks of that extraordinary personage.

September 12th, 1787.

I WAS hardly up before the grand prior and Mr. Street were announced: the latter abusing kings, queens, and princes, with all his might, and roaring after liberty and independence; the former complaining of fogs and damps.

As soon as the advocate for republicanism had taken his departure, we went by appointment to the archbishop confessor's, and were immediately admitted into his *sanctum sanctorum*, a snug apartment communicating by a winding staircase with that of the queen; and hung with bright, lively tapestry. A lay-brother, fat, round, buffoonical, and to the full

as coarse and vulgar as any carter or muleteer in christendom, entertained us with some very amusing, though not the most decent, palace stories, till his patron came forth.

Those who expect to see the Grand Inquisitor of Portugal, a doleful, meagre figure, with eyes of reproof and malediction, would be disappointed, A pleasanter or more honest countenance than that kind heaven has blessed him with, one has seldom the comfort of looking upon. He received me in the most open, cordial manner, and I have reason to think I am in mighty favour.

We talked about archbishops in England being married. "Pray," said the prelate, "are not your archbishops strange fellows? consecrated in ale-houses, and good bottle companions? I have been told that mad-cap Lord Tyrawley was an archbishop at home." You may imagine how much I laughed at this inconceivable nonsense; and though I cannot say, speaking of his right reverence, that "truths divine came mended from his tongue," it may be allowed, that nonsense itself became more conspicuously nonsensical, flowing from so revered a source.

Whilst we sat in the windows of the saloon, listening to a band of regimental music, we saw Joaô Antonio de Castro, the ingenious mechanician, who invented the present method of lighting Lisbon, two or three solemn dominicans, and a famous court fool* in a tawdry gala-suit, bedizened with mock orders, coming up the steps which lead to the great audience-chamber, all together. "Ay, ay," said the lay-brother, who is a shrewd, comical fellow, "behold a true picture of our customers. Three sorts of persons find their way most readily into this palace; men of superior abilities, buffoons, and saints; the first soon lose what cleverness they possessed, the saints become martyrs, and the buffoons alone prosper."

To all this the Archbishop gave his hearty assent by a very significant nod of the head; and being, as I have already told you, in a most gracious, communicative disposition, would not permit me to go away, when I rose up to take leave of him.

"No, no," said he, "dont think of quitting me yet awhile. Let us repair to the hall of Swans, where all the court are waiting for me,

* Don Joaô da Valperra.

and pray tell me then what you think of our great fidalgos."

Taking me by the tip of the fingers he led me along through a number of shady rooms and dark passages to a private door, which opened from the queen's presence-chamber, into a vast saloon, crowded, I really believe, by half the dignitaries of the kingdom; here were bishops, heads of orders, secretaries of state, generals, lords of the bedchamber, and courtiers of all denominations, as fine and as conspicuous as embroidered uniforms, stars, crosses and gold keys could make them.

The astonishment of this group at our sudden apparition was truly laughable, and indeed, no wonder; we must have appeared on the point of beginning a minuet—the portly archbishop in his monastic, flowing white drapery, spreading himself out like a turkey in full pride, and myself bowing and advancing in a sort of *pas-grave*, blinking all the while like an owl in sunshine, thanks to my rapid transition from darkness to the most glaring daylight.

Down went half the party upon their knees,

some with petitions and some with memorials; those begging for places and promotions, and these for benedictions, of which my revered conductor was by no means prodigal. He seemed to treat all these eager demonstrations of fawning servility with the most contemptuous composure, and pushing through the crowd which divided respectfully to give us passage, beckoned the viscount Ponte de Lima, the marquis of Lavradio, the count d'Obidos, and two or three of the lords in waiting, into a mean little room, not above twenty by fourteen.

After a deal of adulatory complimentation in a most subdued tone from the circle of courtiers, for which they had got nothing in return but rebuffs and gruntling, the Archbishop drew his chair close to mine, and said with a very distinct and audible pronunciation, " My dear Englishman, these are all a parcel of flattering scoundrels, do not believe one word they say to you. Though they glitter like gold, mud is not meaner—I know them well. Here," continued he, holding up the flap of my coat, " is a proof of english prudence, this little button to secure the pocket is a precious contrivance,

especially in grand company, do not leave it off, do not adopt any of our fashions, or you will repent it."

This sally of wit was received with the most resigned complacency by those who had inspired it, and, staring with all my eyes, and listening with all my ears, I could hardly credit either upon seeing the most complaisant gesticulations, and hearing the most abject protestations of devoted attachment to his right reverence's sacred person from all the company.

There is no saying how long this tide of adulation would have continued pouring on, if it had not been interrupted by a message from the queen, commanding the confessor's immediate attendance. Giving his garments a hearty shake, he trudged off, bawling out to me over his shoulder, "I shall be back in half-an-hour, and you must dine with me."—"Dine with him!" exclaimed the company in chorus: "such an honour never befel any one of us; how fortunate! how distinguished you are!"

Now, I must confess, I was by no means enchanted with this most peculiar invitation; I had a much pleasanter engagement at Penha-Verde, one of the coolest and most romantic

spots in all this poetic district, and felt no vocation to be cooped up in a close bandbox-ical apartment, smelling of paint and varnish enough to give the head-ache; however, there was no getting off. I was told that I must obey, for everybody in these regions, high or low, the royal family themselves not excepted, obeyed the archbishop, and that I ought to esteem myself too happy in so agreeable an opportunity.

It would be only repeating what is known to every one, who knows any thing of courts and courtiers, were I to add the flowery speeches, the warm encomiums, I received from the finest feathered birds of this covey upon my own transcendant perfections, and those of my host that was to be. The half-hour, which, by-the-by, was more than three-quarters, scarcely sufficed for half those very people had to say in my commendation, who, a few days ago, were all reserve and indifference, if I happened to approach them. My summons to this envied repast was conveyed to me by no less a personage than the marquis of M——, who, with gladsome surprise in all his gestures, whispered me, " I am to be of the

party too, the first time in my life I can assure you; not a creature besides is to be admitted; for my uncle is gone home tired of waiting for you."

We knocked at the private door, which was immediately opened, and following the same passages through which I had been before conducted, emerged into an ante-chamber, looking into a very neat little kitchen, where the lay-brother, with his sleeves tucked up to his shoulders, was making hospitable preparation. A table with three covers was prepared in the tapestry-room, and upon a sofa, in the corner of it, sat the omnipotent prelate wrapped up in an old snuff-coloured great coat, sadly patched and tattered.

"Come," said he, clapping his hands after the oriental fashion, "serve up and let us be merry—oh, these women, these women, above stairs, what a plague it is to settle their differences! Who knows better than you, Marquis, what enigmas they are to unriddle? I dare say the englishman's archbishops have not half such puzzles to get over as I have: well, let us see what we have got for you."

Entered the lay-brother with three roasting-

pigs, on a huge tray of massive silver, and an enormous pillau, as admirable in quality as in size; and so it had need to have been, for in these two dishes consisted our whole dinner. I am told the fare at the Archbishop's table never varies, and roasting-pigs succeed roasting-pigs, and pillaus pillaus, throughout all the vicissitudes of the seasons, except on certain peculiar fast-days of supreme meagre.

The simplicity of this part of our entertainment was made up by the profusion and splendour of our dessert, which exceeded in variety of fruits and sweetmeats any one of which I had ever partaken. As to the wines, they were admirable, the tribute of every part of the Portuguese dominions offered up at this holy shrine. The Port Company, who are just soliciting the renewal of their charter, had contributed the choicest produce of their happiest vintages, and as I happened to commend its peculiar excellence, my hospitable entertainer, whose good-humour seemed to acquire every instant a livelier glow, insisted upon my accepting several pipes of it, which were punctually sent me the next morning. The Archbishop became quite jovial, and supposing I was not more insensible

to the joys of convivial potations than many of my countrymen, plied me as often and as waggishly as if I had been one of his imaginary archbishops, or Lord Tyrawley himself, returned from those cold precincts where no dinners are given or bottle circulated.

The lay-brother was such a fountain of anecdote, the Archbishop in such glee, and Marialva in such jubilation at being admitted to this confidential party, that it is impossible to say how long it would have lasted, had not the hour of her Majesty's evening excursion approached, and the Archbishop been called to accompany her. As Master of the Horse, the Marquis could not dispense with his attendance, so I was left under the guidance of the lay-brother, who, leading me through another labyrinth of passages, opened a kind of wicket door, and let me out with as little ceremony as he would have turned a goose adrift on a common.

LETTER XXVIII.

Explore the Cintra Mountains.—Convent of Nossa Senhora da Penha.—Moorish Ruins.—The Cork Convent.—The Rock of Lisbon.—Marine Scenery.—Susceptible imagination of the Ancients exemplified.

Sept. 19th, 1787.

NEVER did I behold so fine a day, or a sky of such lovely azure. The M—— were with me by half-past six, and we rode over wild hills, which command a great extent of apparently desert country; for the villages, if there are any, are concealed in ravines and hollows.

Intending to explore the Cintra mountains from one extremity to the other of the range, we placed relays at different stations. Our first object was the Convent of Nossa Senhora da Penha, the little romantic pile of white buildings I had seen glittering from afar when I first sailed by the coast of Lisbon. From this pyramidical elevation the view is boundless: you

look immediately down upon an immense expanse of sea, the vast, unlimited Atlantic. A long series of detached clouds of a dazzling whiteness, suspended low over the waves, had a magic effect, and in pagan times might have appeared, without any great stretch of fancy, the cars of marine divinities just risen from the bosom of their element.

There was nothing very interesting in the objects immediately around us. The Moorish remains in the neighbourhood of the convent are scarcely worth notice, and indeed seem never to have made part of any considerable edifice. They were probably built up with the dilapidations of a Roman temple, whose constructors, had perhaps in their turn availed themselves of the fragments of a Punic or Tyrian fane raised on this high place, and blackened with the smoke of some horrible sacrifice.

Amidst the crevices of the mouldering walls, and particularly in the vault of a cistern, which seems to have served both as a reservoir and a bath, I noticed some capillaries and polypodiums of infinite delicacy; and on a little flat space before the convent a numerous tribe of pinks,

gentians, and other alpine plants, fanned and invigorated by the pure mountain air. These refreshing breezes, impregnated with the perfume of innumerable aromatic herbs and flowers, seemed to infuse new life into my veins, and, with it, an almost irresistible impulse, to fall down and worship in this vast temple of Nature the source and cause of existence.

As we had a very extensive ride in contemplation, I could not remain half so long as I wished on this aërial and secluded summit. Descending by a tolerably easy road, which wound amongst the rocks in many an irregular curve, we followed for several miles a narrow tract over the brow of savage and desolate eminences to the Cork convent, which answered exactly, at the first glance we caught of it, the picture one represents to one's self of the settlement of Robinson Crusoe. Before the entrance, formed of two ledges of ponderous rock, extends a smooth level of greensward, browsed by cattle, whose tinkling bells filled me with recollections of early days passed amongst wild and alpine scenery. The Her-

mitage, its cells, chapel, and refectory, are all scooped out of the native marble, and lined with the bark of the cork-tree. Several of the passages about it are not only roofed, but floored with the same material, extremely soft and pleasant to the feet. The shrubberies and garden plats, dispersed amongst the mossy rocks which lie about in the wildest confusion, are delightful, and I took great pleasure in exploring their nooks and corners, following the course of a transparent, gurgling rill, which is conducted through a rustic water-shoot, between bushes of lavender and rosemary of the tenderest green.

The Prior of this romantic retirement is appointed by the Marialvas, and this very day his installation takes place, so we were pressed to dine with him upon the occasion, and could not refuse; but as it was still very early, we galloped on, intending to visit a famous cliff, the Pedra d'Alvidrar, which composes one of the most striking features of that renowned promontory the Rock of Lisbon.

Our road led us through the skirts of the woods which surround the delightful village of Collares, to another range of barren eminences

extending along the sea-shore. I advanced to the very margin of the cliff, which is of great height, and nearly perpendicular. A rabble of boys followed at the heels of our horses, and five stout lads, detached from this posse, descended with the most perfect unconcern the dreadful precipice. One in particular walked down with his arms expanded, like a being of a superior order. The coast is truly picturesque, and consists of bold projections, intermixed with pyramidical rocks succeeding each other in theatrical perspective, the most distant crowned by a lofty tower, which serves as a lighthouse.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the bloom of the atmosphere, and the silvery light reflected from the sea. From the edge of the abyss, where I had remained several minutes like one spell-bound, we descended a winding path, about half a mile, to the beach. Here we found ourselves nearly shut in by shattered cliffs and grottos, a fantastic amphitheatre, the best calculated that can possibly be imagined to invite the sports of sea nymphs. Such coves, such deep and broken recesses, such a play of outline I never beheld, nor did

I ever hear so powerful a roar of rushing waters upon any other coast. No wonder the warm and susceptible imagination of the ancients, inflamed by the scenery of the place, led them to believe they distinguished the conchs of tritons sounding in these retired caverns; nay, some grave Lusitanians positively declared they had not only heard, but seen them, and despatched a messenger to the Emperor Tiberius to announce the event, and congratulate him upon so evident and auspicious a manifestation of divinity.

The tide was beginning to ebb, and allowed us, not without some risk however, to pass into a cavern of surprising loftiness, the sides of which were incrusted with beautiful limpets, and a variety of small shells grouped together. Against some rude and porous fragments, not far from the aperture through which we had crept, the waves swell with violence, rush into the air, form instantaneous canopies of foam, then fall down in a thousand trickling rills of silver. The flickering gleams of light thrown upon irregular arches admitting into darker and more retired grottos, the mysterious, watery gloom, the echoing murmurs and

almost musical sounds, occasioned by the conflict of winds and waters, the strong odour of an atmosphere composed of saline particles, produced altogether such a bewildering effect upon the senses, that I can easily conceive a mind, poetically given, might be thrown into that kind of tone which inclines to the belief of supernatural appearances. I am not surprised, therefore, at the credulity of the ancients, and only wonder my own imagination did not deceive me in a similar manner.

If solitude could have induced the Nereids to have vouchsafed me an apparition, it was not wanting, for all my company had separated upon different pursuits, and had left me entirely to myself. During the full half-hour I remained shut out from the breathing world, one solitary corvo marino was the only living creature I caught sight of, perched upon an insulated rock, about fifty paces from the opening of the cavern.

I was so stunned with the complicated sounds and murmurs which filled my ears, that it was some moments before I could distinguish the voices of Verdeil and Don Pedro, who were just returned from a hunt after seaweeds

and madrapores, calling me loudly to mount on horseback, and make the best of our way to rejoin the Marquis and his attendants, all gone to mass at the Cork convent. Happily, the little detached clouds we had seen from the high point of Nossa Senhora da Penha, instead of melting into the blue sky, had been gathering together, and screened us from the sun. We had therefore a delightful ride, and upon alighting from our palfreys found the old abade just arrived with Luis de Miranda, the colonel of the Cascais regiment, surrounded by a whole synod of monks, as picturesque as bald pates and venerable beards could make them.

As soon as the Marquis came forth from his devotions, dinner was served up exactly in the style one might have expected at Mequinez or Morocco—pillaus of different kinds, delicious quails, and pyramids of rice tinged with saffron. Our dessert, in point of fruits and sweetmeats, was most luxurious, nor would Pomona herself have been ashamed of carrying in her lap such peaches and nectarines as rolled in profusion about the table.

The abade seemed animated after dinner by the spirit of contradiction, and would not

allow the Marquis or Luis de Miranda to know more about the court of John the Fifth, than of that of Pharao, king of Egypt.

To avoid being stunned by the clamours of the dispute, in which two or three monks with stentorian voices began to take part most vehemently, Don Pedro, Verdeil, and I climbed up amongst the hanging shrubberies of arbutus, bay, and myrtle, to a little platform carpeted with delicate herbage, exhaling a fresh, aromatic perfume upon the slightest pressure. There we sat, lulled by the murmur of distant waves, breaking over the craggy shore we had visited in the morning. The clouds came slowly sailing over the hills. My companions pounded the cones of the pines, and gave me the kernels, which have an agreeable almond taste.

The evening was far advanced before we abandoned our peaceful, sequestered situation, and joined the Marquis, who had not been yet able to appease the abade. The vociferous old man made so many appeals to the father-guardian of the convent in defence of his opinions, that I thought we never should have got away. At length we departed, and after

wandering about in clouds and darkness for two hours, reached Cintra exactly at ten. The Marchioness and the children had been much alarmed at our long absence, and rated the abade severely for having occasioned it.

LETTER XXIX.

Excursion to Penha Verde.—Resemblance of that Villa to the edifices in Gaspar Poussin's landscapes.—The ancient pine-trees, said to have been planted by Don John de Castro. — The old forests displaced by gaudy terraces. Influx of visiters.—A celebrated Prior's erudition and strange anachronisms.—The Beast in the Apocalypse.—Œcolampadius.—Bevy of Palace damsels.—Fête at the Marialva Villa.—The Queen and the Royal Family.—A favourite dwarf Negress.—Dignified manner of the Queen.—Profound respect inspired by her presence.—Rigorous etiquette.—Grand display of Fireworks.—The young Countess of Lumiares.—Affecting resemblance.

September 22nd, 1787.

WHEN I got up, the mists were stealing off the hills, and the distant sea discovering itself in all its azure bloom. Though I had been led to expect many visiters of importance from Lisbon, the morning was so inviting that I could not resist riding out after breakfast, even at the risk of not being present at their arrival.

I took the road to Collares, and found the air delightfully soft and fragrant. Some rain which had lately fallen, had refreshed the whole face of the country, and tinged the steeps beyond Penha Verde with purple and green; for the numerous tribe of heaths had started into blossom, and the little irregular lawns, overhung by crooked cork-trees, which occur so frequently by the way-side, are now covered with large white lilies streaked with pink.

Penha Verde itself is a lovely spot. The villa, with its low, flat roofs, and a loggia projecting at one end, exactly resembles the edifices in Gaspar Poussin's landscapes. Before one of the fronts is a square parterre with a fountain in the middle, and niches in the walls with antique busts. Above these walls a variety of trees and shrubs rise to a great elevation, and compose a mass of the richest foliage. The pines, which, by their bright-green colour, have given the epithet of verdant to this rocky point (Penha Verde), are as picturesque as those I used to admire so warmly in the Negroni garden at Rome, and full as ancient, perhaps more so: tradition assures us they were planted by the far-famed Don John de Castro,

whose heart reposes in a small marble chapel beneath their shade.

How often must that heroic heart, whilst it still beat in one of the best and most magnanimous of human bosoms, have yearned after this calm retirement. Here, at least, did it promise itself that rest so cruelly denied him by the blind perversities of his ungrateful countrymen: for his had been an arduous contest, a long and agonizing struggle, not only in the field under a burning sun, and in the face of peril and death, but in sustaining the glory and good fame of Portugal against court intrigues, and the vile cabals of envious, domestic enemies.

These scenes, though still enchanting, have most probably undergone great changes since his days. The deep forests we read of have disappeared, and with them many a spring they fostered. Architectural fountains, gaudy terraces, and regular stripes of orange-gardens, have usurped the place of those wild orchards and gushing rivulets he may be supposed to have often visited in his dreams, when removed some thousand leagues from his native country. All these are changed; but mankind are the

same as in his time, equally insensible to the warning voice of genuine patriotism, equally disposed to crouch under the rod of corrupt tyranny. And thus, by the neglect of wise and virtuous men, and a mean subserviency to knavish fools, eras which might become of gold, are transmuted by an accursed alchymy into iron rusted with blood.

Impressed with all the recollections this most interesting spot could not fail to inspire, I could hardly tear myself away from it. Again and again did I follow the mossy steps, which wind up amongst shady rocks to the little platform, terminated by the sepulchral chapel——

"———densis quam pinus opacat
Frondibus et nulla lucos agitante procella
Stridula coniferis modulatur carmina ramis."

You must not wonder then, that I was haunted the whole way home by these mysterious whisperings, nor that, in such a tone of mind, I saw with no great pleasure a procession of two-wheeled chaises, the lord knows how many out-riders, and a caravan of bouras, marching up to the gate of my villa. I had, indeed, been prepared to expect a very considerable influx of visiters; but this was a deluge.

Do not let me send you a catalogue of the company, lest you should be as much annoyed with the detail, as I was with such a formidable arrival *en masse*. Let it suffice to name two of the principal characters, the old pious Conde de San Lorenzo, and the prior of San Juliaô, one of the archbishop's prime favourites, and a person of great worship. Mortier's Dutch bible happening to lie upon the table, they began tumbling over the leaves in an egregiously awkward manner. I, who abhor seeing books thumbed, and prints demonstrated by the close application of a greasy fore-finger, snapped at the old Conde, and cast an evil look at the prior, who was leaning his whole priestly weight on the volume, and creasing its corners.

My musicians were in full song, and Pedro Grua, a capital violoncello, exerted his abilities in his best style; but San Lorenzo was too pathetically engaged in deploring the massacre of the Innocents to pay him any attention, and his reverend companion had entered into a long-winded dissertation upon parables, miracles, and martyrdom, from which I prayed in vain the Lord to deliver me. Verdeil, scent-

ing from afar the saintly flavour of the discourse, stole off.

I cannot say much in praise of the prior's erudition, even in holy matters, for he positively affirmed that it was Henry the Eighth himself, who knocked St. Thomas à Becket's brains out, and that by the beast in the Apocalypse, Luther was positively indicated. I hate wrangles, and had it not been for the soiling of my prints, should never have contradicted his reverence; but as I was a little out of humour, I lowered him somewhat in the Conde's opinion, by stating the real period of St. Thomas's murder, and by tolerably specious arguments, shoving the beast's horns off Luther, and clapping them tight upon—whom do you think? —Œcolampadius! So grand a name, which very probably they had never heard pronounced in their lives, carried all before it, (adding another instance of the triumph of sound over sense,) and settled our bickerings.

We sat down, I believe, full thirty to dinner, and had hardly got through the dessert, when Berti came in to tell me that Madame Ariaga, and a bevy of the palace damsels, were prancing about the quinta on palfreys and bouras. I

hastened to join them. There was Donna Maria do Carmo, and Donna Maria da Penha, with her hair flowing about her shoulders, and her large beautiful eyes looking as wild and roving as those of an antelope. I called for my horse, and galloped through alleys and citron bushes, brushing off leaves, fruit, and blossoms. Every breeze wafted to us the sound of french horns and oboes. The ladies seemed to enjoy the freedom and novelty of this scamper prodigiously, and to regret the short time it was doomed to last; for at seven they are obliged to return to strict attendance on the Queen, and had some strange fairy-tale metamorphosis into a pumpkin or a cucumber been the penalty of disobedience, they could not have shewn more alarm or anxiety when the fatal hour of seven drew near. Luckily, they had not far to go, for her Majesty and the Royal Family were all assembled at the Marialva villa, to partake of a splendid merenda and see fireworks.

As soon as it fell dark Verdeil and I set forth to catch a glimpse of the royal party. The Grand Prior and Don Pedro conducted us mysteriously into a snug boudoir which looks into the great pavilion, whose gay, fan-

tastic scenery appeared to infinite advantage by the light of innumerable tapers reflected on all sides from lustres of glittering crystal. The little Infanta Donna Carlotta was perched on a sofa in conversation with the Marchioness and Donna Henriquetta, who, in the true oriental fashion, had placed themselves cross-legged on the floor. A troop of maids of honour, commanded by the Countess of Lumiares, sat in the same posture at a little distance. Donna Rosa, the favourite dwarf negress, dressed out in a flaming scarlet riding-habit, not so frolicsome as the last time I had the pleasure of seeing her in this fairy bower, was more sentimental, and leaned against the door, ogling and flirting with a handsome Moor belonging to the Marquis.

Presently the Queen, followed by her sister and daughter-in-law, the Princess of Brazil, came forth from her merenda, and seated herself in front of the latticed-window, behind which I was placed. Her manner struck me as being peculiarly dignified and conciliating. She looks born to command; but at the same time to make that high authority as much

beloved as respected. Justice and clemency, the motto so glaringly misapplied on the banner of the abhorred Inquisition, might be transferred with the strictest truth to this good princess. During the fatal contest betwixt England and its colonies, the wise neutrality she persevered in maintaining was of the most vital benefit to her dominions, and hitherto, the native commerce of Portugal has attained under her mild auspices an unprecedented degree of prosperity.

Nothing could exceed the profound respect, the courtly decorum her presence appeared to inspire. The Conde de Sampayo and the Viscount Ponte de Lima knelt by the august personages with not much less veneration, I should be tempted to imagine, than Moslems before the tomb of their prophet, or Tartars in the presence of the Dalai Lama. Marialva alone, who took his station opposite her Majesty, seemed to preserve his ease and cheerfulness. The Prince of Brazil and Don Joaô looked not a little ennuied; for they kept skulking about with their hands in their pockets, their mouths in a perpetual yawn, and

their eyes wandering from object to object, with a stare of royal vacancy.

A most rigorous etiquette confining the Infants of Portugal within their palaces, they are seldom known to mix even incognito with the crowd; so that their flattering smiles or confidential yawns are not lavished upon common observers. This sort of embalming princes alive, after all, is no bad policy; it keeps them sacred; it concentrates their royal essence, too apt, alas! to evaporate by exposure. What is so liberally paid for by the willing tribute of the people as a rarity of exquisite relish, should not be suffered to turn mundungus. However the individual may dislike this severe regimen, state pageants might have the goodness to recollect for what purpose they are bedecked and beworshiped.

The Conde de Sampayo, lord in waiting, handed the tea to the Queen, and fell down on both knees to present it. This ceremony over, for every thing is ceremony at this stately court, the fire-works were announced, and the royal sufferers, followed by their sufferees, adjourned to a neighbouring apartment. The Marchioness, her daughters, and the Countess

of Lumiares, mounted up to the boudoir where I was sitting, and took possession of the windows. Seven or eight wheels, and as many tourbillons began whirling and whizzing, whilst a profusion of admirable line-rockets darted along in various directions, to the infinite delight of the Countess of Lumiares, who, though hardly sixteen, has been married four years. Her youthful cheerfulness, light hair, and fair complexion, put me so much in mind of my Margaret, that I could not help looking at her with a melancholy tenderness: her being with child increased the resemblance, and as she sat in the recess of the window, discovered at intervals by the blue light of rockets bursting high in the air, I felt my blood thrill as if I beheld a phantom, and my eyes were filled with tears.

The last fire-work being played off, the Queen and the Infantas departed. The Marchioness and the other ladies descended into the pavilion, where we partook of a magnificent and truly royal collation. Donna Maria and her little sister, animated by the dazzling illumination, tripped about in their light muslin dresses, with all the sportiveness

of fairy beings, such as might be supposed to have dropped down from the floating clouds, which Pillement has so well represented on the ceiling.

LETTER XXX.

Cathedral of Lisbon.—Trace of St. Anthony's fingers.—The Holy Crows.—Party formed to visit them.—A Portuguese poet.—Comfortable establishment of the Holy Crows.—Singular tradition connected with them.—Illuminations in honour of the Infanta's accouchement.—Public harangues.—Policarpio's singing, and anecdotes of the *haute noblesse*.

November 8th, 1787.

VERDEIL and I rattled over cracked pavements this morning in my rough travelling-coach, for the sake of exercise. The pretext for our excursion was to see a remarkable chapel, inlaid with jasper and lapis-lazuli, in the church of St. Roch; but when we arrived, three or four masses were celebrating, and not a creature sufficiently disengaged to draw the curtain which veils the altar, so we went out as wise as we came in.

Not having yet seen the cathedral, or See-church, as it is called at Lisbon, we directed our course to that quarter. It is a building of no

striking dimensions, narrow and gloomy, without being awful. The earthquake crumbled its glories to dust, if ever it had any, and so dreadfully shattered the chapels, with which it is clustered, that very slight traces of their having made part of a mosque are discernible.

Though I had not been led to expect great things, even from descriptions in travels and topographical works, which, like peerage-books and pedigrees, are tenderly inclined to make something of what is next to nothing at all: I hunted away, as became a diligent traveller, after altar-pieces and tombs, but can boast of no discoveries. To be sure, we had not much time to look about us: the priests and sacristans, who fastened upon us, insisted upon our revisiting the corner of a bye staircase, where are to be kissed and worshipped the traces of St. Anthony's fingers. The saint, it seems, being closely pursued by the father of lies and parent of evil, alias Old Scratch, (I really could not clearly learn upon what occasion,) indented the sign of the cross into a wall of the hardest marble, and stopped his proceedings. A very pleasing little picture hangs up near the miraculous cross, and records the tradition.

All this was admirable; but nothing in comparison with some stories about certain holy crows. "The very birds are in being," said a sacristan. "What!" answered I, "the individual* crows who attended St. Vincent?"—"Not exactly," was the reply, (in a whisper, intended for my private ear); "but their immediate descendants."—"Mighty well; this very evening, please God, I will pay my respects to them, and in good company, so adieu for the present."

Our next point was the Theatine convent. We looked into the library, which lies in the same confusion in which it was left by the earthquake; half the books out of their shelves, tumbled one over the other in dusty heaps. A shrewd, active monk, who, I am told, has written a history of the House of Braganza, not yet printed, guided our steps through this chaos of literature; and after searching half-an-hour for some curious voyages he wished to display to us, led us into his cell, and pressed our attention to a cabinet of medals he had been at some pains and expense in collecting.

* At the time I wrote this, half Lisbon believed in the individuality of the holy crows, and the other half prudently concealed their scepticism.

Not feeling any particular vocation for numismatic researches, I left Verdeil with the monk, puzzling out some very questionable inscriptions, and went to beat up for recruits to accompany me in the evening to the holy crows. First, I found the Abade Xavier, and secondly, the famous missionary preacher from Boa Morte, and then the Grand Prior, and lastly, the Marquis of Marialva; Don Pedro begged not to be left out, so we formed a coach full, and I drove my whole cargo home to dinner. Verdeil was already returned with his reverend medallist, and had also collected the governor of Goa, Don Frederic de Sousa Cagliariz, his constant attendant a bullying Savoyard, or Piedmontese Count, by name Lucatelli; and a pale, limber, odd-looking young man, Senhor Manuel Maria, the queerest, but, perhaps, the most original of God's poetical creatures. He happened to be in one of those eccentric, lively moods, which, like sunshine in the depth of winter, come on when least expected. A thousand quaint conceits, a thousand flashes of wild merriment, a thousand satirical darts shot from him, and we were all convulsed with laughter; but when he began

reciting some of his compositions, in which great depth of thought is blended with the most pathetic touches, I felt myself thrilled and agitated. Indeed, this strange and versatile character may be said to possess the true wand of enchantment, which, at the will of its master, either animates or petrifies.

Perceiving how much I was attracted towards him, he said to me, "I did not expect an Englishman would have condescended to pay a young, obscure, modern versifier, any attention. You think we have no bard but Camoens, and that Camoens has written nothing worth notice, but the Lusiad. Here is a sonnet worth half the Lusiad. Not an image of rural beauty has escaped our divine poet; and how feelingly are they applied from the landscape to the heart! What a fascinating languor, like the last beams of an evening sun, is thrown over the whole composition! If I am any thing, this sonnet has made me what I am; but what am I, compared to Monteiro? Judge," continued he, putting into my hand some manuscript verses of this author, to whom the Portuguese are vehemently partial. Though they were striking and sonorous, I

must confess the sonnet of Camoens, and many of Senhor Manuel Maria's own verses, pleased me infinitely more; but in fact, I was not sufficiently initiated into the force and idiom of the Portuguese language to be a competent judge; and it was only in fancying me one, that this powerful genius discovered any want of penetration.

Our dinner was lively and convivial. At the dessert, the Abadè produced an immense tray of dried fruits and sweetmeats, which one of his hundred and fifty *protégés* had sent him from, I forget what exotic region. These good things he kept handing to us, and almost cramming down our throats, as if we had been turkeys and he a poulterer, whose livelihood depended upon our fattening. "There," said he, "did you ever behold such admirable productions? Our Queen has thousands and thousands of miles with fruit-groves over your head, and rocks of gold and diamonds beneath your feet. The riches and fertility of her possessions have no bounds, but the sea, and the sea itself might belong to us if we pleased; for we have such means of ship-building, masts two hundred feet high, incorruptible timbers,

courageous seamen. Don Frederic can tell you what some of our heroes achieved not long ago against the gentiles at Goa. Your Joaô Bulles are not half so smart, half so valorous."

Thus he went on, bouncing and roaring us deaf. For patriotic rodomontades and flourishes, no nation excels the Portuguese, and no Portuguese the Abade!

At length, however, all this tasting and praising having been gone through with, we set forth on the wings of holiness, to pay our devoirs to the holy crows. A certain sum having been allotted time immemorial for the maintenance of two birds of this species, we found them very comfortably established in a recess of a cloister adjoining the cathedral, well fed and certainly most devoutly venerated.

The origin of this singular custom dates as high as the days of St. Vincent, who was martyrized near the Cape, which bears his name, and whose mangled body was conveyed to Lisbon in a boat, attended by crows. These disinterested birds, after seeing it decently interred, pursued his murderers with dreadful screams and tore their eyes out. The boat and the crows are painted or sculptured

in every corner of the cathedral, and upon several tablets appear emblazoned an endless record of their penetration in the discovery of criminals.

It was growing late when we arrived, and their feathered sanctities were gone quietly to roost; but the sacristans in waiting, the moment they saw us approach, officiously roused them. O, how plump and sleek, and glossy they are! My admiration of their size, their plumage, and their deep-toned croakings carried me, I fear, beyond the bounds of saintly decorum. I was just stretching out my hand to stroke their feathers, when the missionary checked me with a solemn forbidding look. The rest of the company, aware of the proper ceremonial, kept a respectful distance, whilst the sacristan and a toothless priest, almost bent double with age, communicated a long string of miraculous anecdotes concerning the present holy crows, their immediate predecessors, and other holy crows in the old time before them.

To all these super-marvellous narrations, the missionary appeared to listen with implicit faith, and never opened his lips during the

time we remained in the cloister, except to enforce our veneration, and exclaim with pious composure, "*honrado corvo.*" I really believe we should have stayed till midnight, had not a page arrived from her Majesty to summon the Marquis of M—— and his almoner away.

My curiosity being fully satisfied upon the subject of the holy crows, I was easily persuaded by the grand prior to move off, and drive through the principal streets to see the illuminations in honour of the infanta, consort to Don Gabriel of Spain, who had produced a prince. A great many idlers being abroad upon the same errand, we proceeded with difficulty, and were very near having the wheels of our carriage dislocated in attempting to pass an old-fashioned, preposterous coach, belonging to one of the dignitaries of the patriarchal cathedral. I cannot launch forth in praise of the illuminations; but some rockets which were let off in the Terreiro do Paco, surprised me by the vast height to which they rose, and the unusual number of clear blue stars into which they burst. The Portuguese excel in fireworks; the late poor,

drivelling, saintly king having expended large sums in bringing this art to perfection.

From the Terreiro do Paco we drove to the great square, in which the palace of the Inquisition is situated. There we found a vast mob, to whom three or four capuchin preachers were holding forth upon the glories and illuminations of a better world. I should have listened not uninterested to their harangues, which appeared, from the specimen I caught of them, to be full of fire and frenzy, had not the grand prior, in perpetual awe of the rheumatism, complained of the night, so we drove home. Every apartment of the house was filled with the thick vapour of wax-torches, which had been set most loyally a blazing. I fumed and fretted and threw open the windows. Away went the grand prior, and in came Policarpio, the famous tenor singer, who entertained us with several bravura airs of glib and surprising volubility, before supper and during it, in a style equally professional, with many private anecdotes of the *haute noblesse*, his principal employers, not infinitely to their advantage.

I longed, in return, to have enlarged a little

upon the adventures of the holy crows, but prudently repressed my inclination. It would ill-become a person so well treated as I had been by the crow-fanciers, to handle such subjects with any degree of levity.

LETTER XXXI.

Rambles in the Valley of Collares.—Elysian scenery.—Song of a young female peasant.—Rustic hospitality.—Interview with the Prince of Brazil* in the plains of Cascais. —Conversation with His Royal Highness.—Return to Ramalhaô.

Oct. 19th, 1787.

My health improves every day. The clear exhilarating weather we now enjoy calls forth the liveliest sense of existence. I ride, walk, and climb, as long as I please, without fatiguing myself. The valley of Collares affords me a source of perpetual amusement. I have discovered a variety of paths which lead through chesnut copses and orchards to irregular green spots, where self-sown bays and citron-bushes hang wild over the rocky margin of a little river, and drop their fruit and blossoms into the stream. You may ride for miles along the bank of this delightful water, catching endless

* Don Josè, elder brother of the late king, John VI.

perspectives of flowery thickets, between the stems of poplar and walnut. The scenery is truly elysian, and exactly such as poets assign for the resort of happy spirits.

The mossy fragments of rock, grotesque pollards, and rustic bridges you meet with at every step, recall Savoy and Switzerland to the imagination; but the exotic cast of the vegetation, the vivid green of the citron, the golden fruitage of the orange, the blossoming myrtle, and the rich fragrance of a turf, embroidered with the brightest-coloured and most aromatic flowers, allow me without a violent stretch of fancy to believe myself in the garden of the Hesperides, and to expect the dragon under every tree. I by no means like the thoughts of abandoning these smiling regions, and have been twenty times on the point this very day of revoking the orders I have given for my journey. Whatever objections I may have had to Portugal seem to vanish, since I have determined to leave it; for such is the perversity of human nature, that objects appear the most estimable precisely at the moment when we are going to lose them.

There was this morning a mild radiance in

the sunbeams, and a balsamic serenity in the air, which infused that voluptuous listlessness, that desire of remaining imparadised in one delightful spot, which, in classical fictions, was supposed to render those who had tasted the lotos forgetful of country, of friends, and of every tie. My feelings were not dissimilar, I loathed the idea of moving away.

Though I had entered these beautiful orchards soon after sunrise, the clocks of some distant conventual churches had chimed hour after hour before I could prevail upon myself to quit the spreading odoriferous bay-trees under which I had been lying. If shades so cool and fragrant invited to repose, I must observe that never were paths better calculated to tempt the laziest of beings to a walk, than those which opened on all sides, and are formed of a smooth dry sand, bound firmly together, composing a surface as hard as gravel.

These level paths wind about amongst a labyrinth of light and elegant fruit-trees; almond, plum, and cherry, something like the groves of Tonga-taboo, as represented in Cook's voyages; and to increase the resemblance, neat cane fences and low open sheds, thatched with

reeds, appear at intervals, breaking the horizontal lines of the perspective.

I had now lingered and loitered away pretty nearly the whole morning, and though, as far as scenery could authorize and climate inspire, I might fancy myself an inhabitant of elysium, I could not pretend to be sufficiently ethereal to exist without nourishment. In plain English, I was extremely hungry. The pears, quinces, and oranges which dangled above my head, although fair to the eye, were neither so juicy nor gratifying to the palate, as might have been expected from their promising appearance.

Being considerably

> More than a mile immersed within the wood,*

and not recollecting by which clue of a path I could get out of it, I remained at least half-an-hour deliberating which way to turn myself. The sheds and enclosures I have mentioned were put together with care and even nicety, it is true, but seemed to have no other inhabitants than flocks of bantams, strutting about and destroying the eggs and hopes of many an insect family. These glistening fowls, like

* Dryden.

their brethren described in Anson's voyages, as animating the profound solitudes of the island of Tinian, appeared to have no master.

At length, just as I was beginning to wish myself very heartily in a less romantic region, I heard the loud, though not unmusical, tones of a powerful female voice, echoing through the arched green avenues; presently, a stout ruddy young peasant, very picturesquely attired in brown and scarlet, came hoydening along, driving a mule before her, laden with two enormous panniers of grapes. To ask for a share of this luxuriant load, and to compliment the fair driver, was instantaneous on my part, but to no purpose. I was answered by a sly wink, "We all belong to Senhor Josè Dias, whose corral, or farm-yard, is half a league distant. There, Senhor, if you follow that road, and don't puzzle yourself by straying to the right or left, you will soon reach it, and the bailiff, I dare say, will be proud to give you as many grapes as you please. Good morning, happy days to you! I must mind my business."

Seating herself between the tantalizing panniers, she was gone in an instant, and I had the

good luck to arrive straight at the wicket of a rude, dry wall, winding up and down several bushy slopes in a wild irregular manner. If the outside of this enclosure was rough and unpromising, the interior presented a most cheering scene of rural opulence. Droves of cows and goats milking; ovens, out of which huge cakes of savoury bread had just been taken; ranges of beehives, and long pillared sheds, entirely tapestried with purple and yellow muscadine grapes, half candied, which were hung up to dry. A very good-natured, classical-look magister pecorum, followed by two well-disciplined, though savage-eyed dogs, whom the least glance of their master prevented from barking, gave me a hearty welcome, and with genuine hospitality not only allowed me the free range of his domain, but set whatever it produced in the greatest perfection before me. A contest took place between two or three curly-haired, chubby-faced children, who should be first to bring me walnuts fresh from the shell, bowls of milk, and cream-cheeses, made after the best of fashions, that of the province of Alemtejo.

I found myself so abstracted from the world

in this retirement, so perfectly transported back some centuries into primitive patriarchal times, that I don't recollect having ever enjoyed a few hours of more delightful calm. "Here," did I say to myself, "am I out of the way of courts and ceremonies, and commonplace visitations, or salutations, or gossip." But, alas! how vain is all one thinks or says to one's self nineteen times out of twenty.

Whilst I was blessing my stars for this truce to the irksome bustle of the life I had led ever since her Majesty's arrival at Cintra, a loud hallooing, the cracking of whips, and the tramping of horses, made me start up from the snug corner in which I had established myself, and dispelled all my soothing visions. Luis de Miranda, the colonel of the Cascais regiment, an intimate confidant and favourite of the Prince of Brazil, broke in upon me with a thousand (as he thought) obliging reproaches, for having deserted Ramalhaô the very morning he had come on purpose to dine with me, and to propose a ride after dinner to a particular point of the Cintra mountains, which commands, he assured me, such a prospect as I had not yet been blessed with in Portugal. "It is not even

now," said he, "too late. I have brought your horses along with me, whom I found fretting and stamping under a great tree at the entrance of these foolish lanes. Come, get into your stirrups for God's sake, and I will answer for your thinking yourself well repaid by the scene I shall disclose to you."

As I was doomed to be disturbed and talked out of the elysium in which I had been lapped for these last seven or eight hours, it was no matter in what position, whether on foot or on horseback; I therefore complied, and away we galloped. The horses were remarkably sure-footed, or else, I think, we must have rolled down the precipices; for our road,

"If road it could be call'd where road was none,"

led us by zigzags and short cuts over steeps and acclivities about three or four leagues, till reaching a heathy desert, where a solitary cross staring out of a few weather-beaten bushes, marked the highest point of this wild eminence, one of the most expansive prospects of sea, and plain, and distant mountains, I ever beheld, burst suddenly upon me, rendered still more vast, aërial, and indefinite, by the visionary, magic vapour of the evening sun.

After enjoying a moment or two the general effect, I began tracing out the principal objects in the view, as far, that is to say, as they could be traced, through the medium of the intense glowing haze. I followed the course of the Tagus, from its entrance till it was lost in the low estuaries beyond Lisbon. Cascais appeared with its long reaches of wall and bomb-proof casemates like a Moorish town, and by the help of a glass I distinguished a tall palm lifting itself above a cluster of white buildings.

"Well," said I, to my conductor, "this prospect has certainly charms worth seeing; but not sufficient to make me forget that it is high time to get home and refresh ourselves." "Not so fast," was the answer, "we have still a great deal more to see."

Having acquired, I can hardly tell why or wherefore, a sheep-like habit of following wherever he led, I spurred after him down a rough declivity, thick strewn with rolling stones and pebbles. At the bottom of this descent, a dreary sun-burnt plain extended itself far and wide. Whilst we dismounted and halted a few minutes to give our horses breath, I could not help observing, that the view we

were now contemplating but ill-rewarded the risk of breaking our necks in riding down such rapid declivities. He smiled, and asked me whether I saw nothing at all interesting in the prospect. "Yes," said I, "a sort of caravan I perceive, about a quarter of a mile off, is by no means uninteresting; that confused group of people in scarlet, with gleaming arms and sumpter-mules, and those striped awnings stretched from ruined walls, present exactly that kind of scenery I should expect to meet with in the neighbourhood of Grand Cairo." "Come then," said he, "it is time to clear up this mystery, and tell you for what purpose we have taken such a long and fatiguing ride. The caravan which strikes you as being so very picturesque, is composed of the attendants of the Prince of Brazil, who has been passing the whole day upon a shooting-party, and is just at this moment taking a little repose beneath yonder awnings. It was by his desire I brought you here, for I have his commands to express his wishes of having half-an-hour's conversation with you, unobserved, and in perfect incognito. Walk on as if you were collecting plants or taking sketches, I will apprize his

royal highness, and you will meet as it were by chance, and without any form. No one shall be near enough to hear a word you say to each other, for I will take my station at the distance of at least one hundred paces, and keep off all spies and intruders."

I did as I was directed. A little door in the ruined wall, against which an awning was fixed, opened, and there appeared a young man of rather a prepossessing figure, fairer and ruddier than most of his countrymen, who advanced towards me with a very pleasant engaging countenance, moved his hat in a dignified graceful manner, and after insisting upon my being covered, began addressing himself to me with great precipitation, in a most fluent lingua-franca, half Italian and half Portuguese. This jargon is very prevalent at the Ajuda*

*. The royal chapel of the Ajuda, though somewhat fallen from the unequalled splendour it boasted during the sing-song days of the late king, Don Joseph, still displayed some of the finest specimens of vocal manufacture which Italy could furnish. It possessed, at the same time, Carlo Reina, Ferracuti, Totti, Fedelino, Ripa, Gelati, Venanzio, Biagino and Marini—all these *virtuosi*, with names ending in vowels, were either *contraltos* of the softest note, or *sopranos* of the highest squeakery.

palace, where Italian singers are in much higher request and fashion than persons of deeper tone and intellect.

The first question his royal highness honoured me with was, whether I had visited his cabinet of instruments. Upon my answering in the affirmative, and that the apparatus appeared to me extremely perfect, and in admirable order, he observed, "The arrangement is certainly good, for one of my particular friends, a very learned man, has made it; but notwithstanding the high price I have paid, your Ramsdens and Dollonds have treated themselves more generously than me. I believe," continued his royal highness, "according to what the Duke d'Alafoens has repeatedly assured me, I am conversing with a person who has no weak, blind prejudices, in favour of his country, and who sees things as they are, not as they have been, or as they ought to be. That commercial greediness the English display in every transaction has cost us dear in more than one particular."

He then ran over the ground Pombal had so often trodden bare, both in his state papers and in various publications which had been pro-

mulgated during his administration, and I soon perceived of what school his royal highness was a disciple.

"We deserve all this," continued he, "and worse, for our tame acquiescence in every measure your cabinet dictates; but no wonder, oppressed and debased as we are, by ponderous, useless institutions. When there are so many drones in a hive, it is in vain to look for honey. Were you not surprised, were you not shocked, at finding us so many centuries behind the rest of Europe?"

I bowed, and smiled. This spark of approbation induced, I believe, his royal highness to blaze forth into a flaming encomium upon certain reforms and purifications which were carrying on in Brabant, under the auspices of his most sacred apostolic majesty Joseph the second. "I have the happiness," continued the prince, "to correspond not unfrequently with this enlightened sovereign. The Duke d'Alafoens, who has likewise the advantage of communicating with him, never fails to give me the detail of these salutary proceedings. When shall we have sufficient manliness to imitate them!"

Though I bowed and smiled again, I could not resist taking the liberty of observing that such very rapid and vigorous measures as those his imperial majesty had resorted to, were more to be admired than imitated; that people who had been so long in darkness, if too suddenly broken in upon by a stream of effulgence, were more likely to be blinded than enlightened; and that blows given at random by persons whose eyes were closed were dangerous, and might fall heaviest perhaps in directions very opposite to those for which they were intended. This was rather bold, and did not seem to please the novice in boldness.

After a short pause, which allowed him, at least, an opportunity of taking breath, he looked steadily at me, and perceiving my countenance arrayed in the best expression of admiration I could throw into it, resumed the thread of his philosophical discourse, and even condescended to detail some very singular and, as they struck me, most perilous projects. Continuing to talk on with an increased impetus (like those whose steps are accelerated by running down hill) he dropped some vague hints of measures that filled me not only with surprise,

but with a sensation approaching to horror. I bowed, but I could not smile. My imagination, which had caught the alarm at the extraordinary nature of the topics he was discoursing upon, conjured up a train of appalling imgaes, and I asked myself more than once whether I was not under the influence of a distempered dream.

Being too much engaged in listening to himself to notice my confusion, he worked as hard as a pioneer in clearing away the rubbish of ages, entered minutely and not unlearnedly into the ancient jurisprudence and maxims of his country, its relations with foreign powers, and the rank from whence it had fallen in modern times, to be attributed in a great measure, he observed, to a blind and mistaken reliance upon the selfish politics of our predominant island. Although he did not spare my country, he certainly appeared not over partial to his own. He painted its military defects and priest-ridden policy in vivid colours. In short, this part of our discourse was a "*deploratio Lusitanicæ Gentis,*" full as vehement as that which the celebrated Damien a Goes, to show his fine Latin and fine huma-

nity, poured forth some centuries ago over the poor wretched Laplanders.

Not approving in any degree the tendency of all this display, I most heartily prayed it might end. Above an hour had passed since it began, and flattered as I was by the protraction of so condescending a conference, I could not help thinking that these fountains of honour are fountains of talk and not of mercy; they flow over, if once set a going, without pity or moderation. Persons in supreme stations, whom no one ventures to contradict, run on at a furious rate. You frequently flatter yourself they are exhausted; but you flatter yourself in vain. Sometimes indeed, by way of variety, they contradict themselves, and then the debate is carried on between self and self, to the desperation of their subject auditors, who without being guilty of a word in reply, are involved in the same penalty as the most captious disputant. This was my case. I scarcely uttered a syllable after my first unsuccessful essay; but thousands of words were nevertheless lavished upon me, and innumerable questions proposed and answered by the questioner with equal rapidity.

In return for the honour of being admitted to this monological dialogue, I kept bowing and nodding; and towards the close of the conference, contrived to smile again pretty decently. His royal highness, I learned afterwards, was satisfied with my looks and gestures, and even bestowed a brevet upon me of a great deal more erudition than I possessed or pretended to.

The sun set, the dews fell, the prince retired, Louis de Miranda followed him, and I remounted my horse with an indigestion of sounding phrases, and the most confirmed belief that "*the church was in danger.*"

Tired and exhausted, I threw myself on my sofa the moment I reached Ramalhaô; but the agitation of my spirits would not allow me any repose. I swallowed some tea with avidity, and driving to the palace, evocated the archbishop confessor, who had been locked up above half-an-hour in his interior cabinet. To him I related all that had passed at this unsought, unexpected interview. The consequences in time developed themselves.

LETTER XXXII.

Convent of Boa Morte.—Emaciated priests.—Austerity of the Order.—Contrite personages.—A *nouveau riche*.—His house.—Walk on the veranda of the palace at Belem.—Train of attendants at dinner.—Portuguese gluttony.—Black dose of legendary superstition.—Terrible denunciations.—A dreary evening.

Nov. 9th, 1787.

M—— and his principal almoner, a renowned missionary, and one of the most eloquent preachers in her majesty's dominions, were at my door by ten, waiting to take me with them to the convent of Boa Morte. This is a true Golgotha, a place of many skulls, for its inhabitants, though they live, move, and have a sort of being, are little better than skeletons. The priest who officiated appeared so emaciated and cadaverous, that I could hardly have supposed he would have had strength sufficient to elevate the chalice. It did not, however, fall from his hands, and having

finished his mass, a second phantom tottered forth and began another. From the pictures and images of more than ordinary ghastliness which cover the chapels and cloisters, and from the deep contrition apparent in the tears, gestures, and ejaculations of the faithful who resort to them, I fancy no convent in Lisbon can be compared with this for austerity and devotion.

M—— shook all over with piety, and so did his companion, whose knees are become horny with frequent kneelings, and who, if one is to believe Verdeil, will end his days in a hermitage, or go mad, or perhaps both. He pretends, too, that it is this grey-beard that has added new fuel to the flame of M——'s devotion, and that by mutually encouraging each other, they will soon produce fruits worthy of Bedlam, if not of Paradise. To be sure, this father may boast a conspicuously devout turn, and a most resolute manner of thumping himself; but he must not be too vain. In Lisbon there are at least fifty or sixty thousand good souls, who, without having travelled so far, thump full as sonorously as he. This morning, at Boa Morte, one shrivelled sinner re-

mained the whole time the masses lasted with outstretched arms, in the shape and with all the inflexible stiffness of an old-fashioned branched candlestick. Another contrite personage was so affected at the moment of consecration, that he flattened his nose on the pavement, and licked the dirt and dust with which it was thickly encrusted.

I must confess that, notwithstanding this very superior display of sanctity, I was not sorry to escape from the dingy cloisters of the convent, and breathe the pure air, and look up at the blue exhilarating sky. The weather being delightful, we drove to several distant parts of the town, to which I was yet a stranger. Returning back by the Bairro Alto, we looked into a new house, just finished building at an enormous expense, by Joaô Ferreira, who, from an humble retailer of leather, has risen, by the archbishop's favour, to the possession of some of the most lucrative contracts in Portugal. Uglier-shaped apartments than those the poor shoe-man had contrived for himself I never beheld. The hangings are of satin of the deepest blue, and the fiercest and most sulphureous yellow. Every ceiling is daubed

over with allegorical paintings, most indifferently executed, and loaded with gilt ornaments, in the style of those splendid sign-posts which some years past were the glory of High-Holborn and St. Giles's.

We were soon tired of all this finery, and as it was growing late, made the best of our way to Belem. Whilst M—— was writing letters, I walked out with Don Pedro on the verandas of the palace, which are washed by the Tagus, and flanked with turrets. The views are enchanting, and the day being warm and serene, I enjoyed them in all their beauty. Several large vessels passed by as we were leaning over the balustrades, and almost touched us with their streamers. Even frigates and ships of the first rate approach within a quarter of a mile of the palace.

There was a greater crowd of attendants than usual round our table at dinner to-day, and the huge massy dishes were brought up by a long train of gentlemen and chaplains, several of them decorated with the orders of Avis and Christ. This attendance had quite a feudal air, and transported the imagination to the days of chivalry, when great chieftains were waited upon like kings, by noble vassals.

The Portuguese had need have the stomachs of ostriches to digest the loads of savoury viands with which they cram themselves. Their vegetables, their rice, their poultry, are all stewed in the essence of ham, and so strongly seasoned with pepper and spices, that a spoonful of peas, or a quarter of an onion, is sufficient to set one's mouth in a flame. With such a diet, and the continual swallowing of sweetmeats, I am not surprised at their complaining so often of head-aches and vapours.

Several of the old Marquis of M——'s confidants and buffoons crept forth to have a peep at the stranger, and hear the famous missionary descant upon martyrdom and miracles. The scenery of Boa Morte being fresh in his thoughts, his descriptions were gloomy and appalling: Don Pedro, his sisters, and his cousin, the young Conde d'Atalaya,* gathered round him with all the trembling eagerness of children, who hunger and thirst after hobgoblin stories. You may be sure he sent them not empty away. A blacker dose of legendary superstition was never administered. The marchioness seemed to swallow these terrific narrations with nearly as much avidity as her chil-

* Now Marquis of Tancos.

dren, and the old abade, dropping his chin in a woful manner, produced an enormous rosary, and kept thumbing his beads and mumbling orisons.

M—— had luckily been summoned to the palace by a special mandate from his royal mistress. Had he been of the party, I fear Verdeil's prophecy would have been accomplished, for never did mortal hold forth with so much scaring energy as this enthusiastic preacher. The most terrible denunciations of divine wrath which ever were thundered forth by ancient or modern writers of sermons and homilies recurred to his memory, and he dealt them about him with a vengeance. The last half hour of the discourse we were all in total darkness,—nobody had thought of calling for lights: the children were huddled together, scarce venturing to move or breathe. It was a most singular scene.

Full of the ghastly images the good father had conjured up in my imagination, I returned home alone in my carriage, shivering and shuddering. My friends were out, and nothing could be more dreary than the appearance of my fireless apartments.

LETTER XXXIII.

Rehearsal of Seguidillas.—Evening scene.—Crowds of beggars.—Royal charity misplaced.—Mendicant flattery.—Frightful countenances.—Performance at the Salitri theatre.—Countess of Pombeiro and her dwarf negresses.—A strange ballet.—Return to the Palace.—Supper at the Camareira Mor's.—Filial affection.—Last interview with the Archbishop.—Fatal tide of events.—Heart-felt regret on leaving Portugal.

Sunday, November 25th, 1787.

WHAT a morning for the 25th of November! The sun shining most brilliantly, insects fluttering about, and flowers expanding—the late rains having called forth a second spring, and tinted the hills round Almada, on the opposite shore of the Tagus, with a lively green.

I breakfasted alone, Verdeil being gone to St. Roch's, to see the ceremony of publishing the bull of the Crusade, which allows good christians to eat eggs and butter during Lent, upon paying his holiness a few shillings. I stayed at home, hearing a rehearsal of Seguidil-

las, in preparation for a new intermez at the Salitri theatre, till the hour of mass was over, then getting into the Portuguese chaise, drove headlong to the palace in the Placa do Commercio, and hastened to the Marquis of M——'s apartments. All his family were assembled to dine with him.

Had it not been for the thoughts of my approaching departure, I should have felt more comfort and happiness than has fallen to my lot for a long interval. M——, whose attendance on the queen may be too justly termed a state of downright slavery, had hardly taken his place at table, before he was called away. The marchioness, Donna Henriquetta and her little sister soon retreated to the Camareira-Mor's apartments, and I was left alone with Pedro and Duarte. They seized fast hold, each of a hand, and running like greyhounds through long corridors, took me to a balcony which commands one of the greatest thoroughfares in Lisbon.

The evening was delightful, and vast crowds of people moving about, of all degrees and nations, old and young, active and crippled, monks and officers. Shoals of beggars kept

pouring in from every quarter to take their stands at the gates of the palace and watch the queen's going out; for her majesty is a most indulgent mother to these sturdy sons of idleness, and scarcely ever steps into her carriage without distributing considerable alms amongst them. By this misplaced charity, hundreds of stout fellows are taught the management of a crutch instead of a musket, and the art of manufacturing sores, ulcers, and scabby pates, in the most loathsome perfection. Duarte, who is all life and gaiety, vaulted upon the railing of the balcony, and hung for a moment or two suspended in a manner that would have frightened mothers and nurses into convulsions. The beggars, who had nothing to do till her majesty should be forthcoming, seemed to be vastly entertained with these feats of agility.

They soon spied me out, and two brawny lubbers, whom an unfortunate combination of small-pox and king's-evil had deprived of eye-sight, informed, no doubt, by their comrades of what was going forward, began a curious dialogue with voices still deeper and harsher than those of the holy crows:—"Heaven prosper their noble excellencies, Don Duarte Manoel and

Don Pedro, and all the Marialvas — sweet dear youths, long may they be blessed with the use of their eyes and of all their limbs! Is that the charitable Englishman in their sweet company?"—"Yes, my comrade," answered the second blind.—"What!" said the first, "that generous favourite of the most glorious Lord St. Anthony (O gloriosissimo Senhor Sant-Antonio.)"—"Yes, my comrade."—"O that I had but my precious eyes that I might enjoy the sight of his countenance!" exclaimed both together.

By the time the duet was thus far advanced, the halt, the maimed, and the scabby, having tied some greasy nightcaps to the end of long poles, poked them up through the very railing, bawling and roaring out charity, "charity for the sake of the holy one of Lisbon." Never was I looked up to by a more distorted or frightful collection of countenances. I made haste to throw down a plentiful shower of small copper money, or else Duarte would have twitched away both poles and nightcaps, a frolic by no means to be encouraged, as it might have marred our fame for the readiest

and most polite attention to every demand in the name of St. Anthony.

Just as the orators were receiving their portion of pence and farthings, a cry of "There's the queen, there's the princess!" carried the whole hideous crowd away to another scene of action, and left me at full liberty to be amused in my turn with the squirrel-like gambols of my lively companion; he is really a fine enterprising boy, bold, alert, and sprightly; quite different from most of his illustrious young relations.

Don Pedro by no means approved my English partiality to such active feats, and after scolding his cousin for skipping about in so hazardous a style, intreated me to take them to the Salitri theatre, where a box had been prepared for us by his father's orders. Upon the whole, I was better entertained than I expected, though the performance lasted above four hours and a half, from seven to near twelve. It consisted of a ranting prose tragedy, in three acts, called Sesostris, two ballets, a pastoral, and a farce. The decorations were not amiss, and the dresses showy. A shambling, blear-eyed boy, bundled out in weeds of the deepest sable,

squeaked and bellowed alternately the part of a widowed princess. Another hob-e-di-hoy, tottering on high-heeled shoes, represented her egyptian majesty, and warbled two airs with all the nauseous sweetness of a fluted falsetto. Though I could have boxed his ears for surfeiting mine so filthily, the audience were of a very different opinion, and were quite enthusiastic in their applause.

In the stage-box I observed the mincing Countess of Pombeiro, whose light hair and waxen complexion was finely contrasted by the ebon hue of two little negro attendants perched on each side of her. It is the high ton at present in this court to be surrounded by African implings, the more hideous, the more prized, and to bedizen them in the most expensive manner. The queen has set the example, and the royal family vie with each other in spoiling and caressing Donna Rosa, her majesty's black-skinned, blubber-lipped, flat-nosed favourite.

One of the ballets was admirably got up; upon the rising of the curtain, a strange cabalistic apartment is discovered, where an astrologer appears very busy at a table covered

with spheres and astrolabes, arranging certain mysterious images, and pinking their eyes with a gigantic pair of black compasses. A sort of Pierrot announces some inquisitive travellers, who enter with many bows and scrapings. One of them, the chief of the party, an old dapper beau in pink and silver, reminded me very much of the Duke d'Alafoens, and sidled along and tossed his cane about, and seemed to ask questions without waiting for answers, with as good a grace as that janty general. The astrologer, after explaining the wonders of his apartment with many pantomimical contortions, invites his company to follow him, and the scene changes to a long gallery, illuminated with a profusion of lights in gilt branches. The perspective ends in a flight of steps, upon each of which stands a row of figures, pantaloons, harlequins, sultans, sultanas, indian chiefs, devils, and savages, to all appearance motionless. Pierrot brings in a machine like a hand-organ, and his master begins to grind, the music accompanying. At the first chord, down drop the arms of all the figures; at the second, each rank descends a step, and so on, till gaining the level of the stage, and the

astrologer grinding faster and faster, the supposed clock-work-assembly begin a general dance.

Their ballet ended, the same accords are repeated, and all hop up in the same stiff manner they hopped down. The travellers, highly pleased with the show, depart; Pierrot, who longs to be grinding, persuades his master to take a walk, and leave him in possession of the gallery. He consents; but enjoins the gaping oaf upon no account to meddle with the machine, or set the figures in motion. Vain are his directions! no sooner has he turned his back than Pierrot goes to work with all his strength; the figures fall a shaking as if on the point of disjoining themselves; creak, crack, grinds the machine with horrid harshness; legs, arms, and noddles are thrown into convulsions, three steps are jumped at once. Pierrot, frightened out of his senses at the goggle-eyed crowd advancing upon him, clings close to the machine and gives the handle no respite. The music, too, degenerates into the most jarring, screaking sounds, and the figures knocking against each other, and whirling round and round in utter

confusion, fall flat upon the stage. Pierrot runs from group to group in rueful despair, tries in vain to reanimate them, and at length losing all patience, throws one over the other, and heaps sultanas upon savages, and shepherds upon devilkins. Most of these personages being represented by boys of twelve or thirteen were easily wielded. After Pierrot has finished tossing and tumbling, he drops down exhausted and lies as dead as his neighbours, hoping to escape unnoticed amongst them. But this subterfuge avails him not; in comes the astrologer armed with his compasses; back he starts at sight of the confounded jumble. Pierrot pays for it all, is soon drawn forth from his lurking-place, and the astrologer grinding in a moderate and scientific manner, the figures lift themselves up, and returning all in *statu quo*, the ballet finishes.

Shall I confess that this nonsense amused me pretty nearly as much as it did my companions, whose raptures were only exceeded by those of madame de Pombeiro's implings. They, sweet, sooty innocents, kept gibbering and pointing at the man with the black compasses in a manner so completely African and

ludicrous, that I thought their contortions the best part of the entertainment.

The play ended, we hastened back to the palace, and traversing a number of dark vestibules and guard-chambers, (all of a snore with jaded equerries,) were almost blinded with a blaze of light from the room in which supper was served up. There we found in addition to all the Marialvas, the old marquis only excepted, the Camareira-mor, and five or six other hags of supreme quality, feeding like cormorants upon a variety of high-coloured and high-seasoned dishes. I suppose the keen air from the Tagus, which blows right into the palace-windows, operates as a powerful whet, for I never beheld eaters or eateresses, no not even our old acquaintance madame la Présidente at Paris, lay about them with greater intrepidity. To be sure, it was a splendid repast, quite a banquet. We had manjar branco and manjar real, and among other good things a certain preparation of rice and chicken, which suited me exactly, and no wonder, for this excellent mess had been just tossed up by Donna Isabel de Castro with her own illustrious hands, in a nice little

kitchen adjoining the queen's apartment, in which all the utensils are of solid silver.

The number of lights upon the table, and of attendants and pages in rich uniforms around it, was prodigious; but what interested me far more than all this parade, was the sportive good-humour and frankness of the company. How it happened that the presence of a stranger failed to inspire any reserve, is one of those odd circumstances I can hardly account for; especially as the higher orders of the Portuguese are the farthest removed of all persons from admitting any but their nearest relations to these family parties; but so it was, and I felt both flattered and gratified at being permitted to witness the ease and hilarity which prevailed.

The dutiful, affectionate attention of the younger part of the company to their parents was truly amiable; nor do I believe that, at this day in any other realm in Europe, the sacred precept of honouring your father and your mother is so cordially observed as in Portugal. Happy if, in our intercourse with that nation, we had profited in that respect by their example; the peace of so many of

our noblest families would not have been disturbed by the lowest connexions, nor their best blood contaminated by matches of the most immoral, degrading tendency. We should not have seen one year a performer acting the part of lady this or lady t'other upon the stage, and the next in the drawing-room; nor, upon entering some of our principal houses, have been tempted to cry out—"Bless me! that lovely countenance is the same I recollect adoring by moonlight on the fine broad flag-stones of Bond Street or Portland Place!" *

It was now after two in the morning, and I must own, notwithstanding the good cheer of which I had participated, and the kind entertainment I had received, I began to feel a little tired. The children were in such spirits, so full of frolic, and her sublimity, the

* About the period of the present king's accession, several ladies of this description had bounced into the peerage; but as they did not walk at the coronation, somebody observed, it was odd enough that the peeresses best accustomed to a free use of their limbs, declined stirring a step upon this occasion. Horace Walpole mentions this bon mot in some of his letters; I forget to whom he attributes it.

Camareira-mor, so unusually tolerant and condescending, that there was no knowing when the party would break up. Taking, therefore, my leave in due form, I made my retreat escorted by half-a-dozen torch-bearers.

Just as I had gotten about half-way on my journey through what appeared to me interminable passages, I was arrested in my progress by a pair of dominicans, father Rocha, and his scarecrow satellite frè Josè do Rosario. A person less accustomed than I had lately been to such apparitions would have been startled; especially, too, if he had found himself like me between the most formidable living pillars of the holy inquisition.

"What are you doing here so very late," I could not help exclaiming, "my reverend fathers? What's the matter?"

"The matter is," answered Rocha, with a voice of terrific hoarseness, "that we have caught cold waiting for you in these confounded corridors. The archbishop, above half-an-hour ago, commanded us to bring you to him dead or alive; but a rascally jackanapes in waiting upon her excellency the Camareira-

mor would not let us in to deliver our message, so we have been airing ourselves hitherto to no purpose."

"Do you know," said Rocha, taking me into a little room where a lamp was still burning, "that affairs do not go on so smoothly as they ought? The archbishop seems to have lost both time and temper since he has been pressed into the cabinet; and, as for the Prince of Brazil and his consort, God forgive me for wishing their advisers and all their intrigues in the lowest abyss of perdition. How can you be scheming a journey to Madrid at this season? The floods are out, and the robbers also, and I tell you what, as the archbishop says twenty times a day, if you do go you deserve to be drowned and murdered."

"The die is cast," I replied, "and I must take my chance; but really I wish you would have the goodness to bid the archbishop a very good night in my name, and let me put off asking his benediction till to-morrow, for I am quite jaded."

"Jaded or not," answered the monk, "you must come with me; the wind is up in the archbishop's brain just at this moment, and by the least contradiction more would become a hurricane."

Finding resistance vain, I suffered myself to be conducted through two or three open courts, very refreshing at this hour you may suppose, and up a little staircase into the archbishop's interior cabinet. All was still as death—no lay-brother bustling about—no sound audible but a low breathing, which now and then swelled into a half suppressed groan, from the agitated prelate, whom we found knee-deep in papers, immersed in thought.

"So," said he, "there you are at last. What have you been doing all this while? Who but a brute of an Englishman would have kept me waiting. Ay, ay, you told me how it would be, and you are right. They plague my soul out. We have twenty rascals pulling as many ways. Your people too are not what they used to be, though Mello would make us believe to the contrary. One thing I know for certain, some infernal mischief is afloat, and unless God's grace is speedily manifested, I see no end to confusion, and wish myself anywhere but where I am. These smooth-tongued, frenchified, italian, Voltaireists and encyclopedians have poisoned all sound doctrine. Ay," continued he, rising up, with an expression of indignation and anger I

never saw before on his countenance, "somebody's ears * are poisoned whom I could name . . . But where is the use of talking to you? You are determined to leave us, be it so. God's providence is above all. He knows what is best for you, and for me, and for these kingdoms. There is your passport, countersigned by your friend Mello; and here is a letter for Lorenzana, and another for his catholic majesty's confessor, in which I tell him what an amazing fool you are, and unless you continue one without any remission, we shall soon have you back again. Tell Marialva," he added, addressing himself to Rocha (for the other father had not been admitted), "tell Marialva and all his friends that

* The personage in question paid dearly for having listened to evil counsellors and exciting the suspicions of the church. In about a twelvemonth after this conversation, the small pox, not attended to so skilfully as it might have been, was suffered to carry him off, and reduced his imperious widow to a mere cipher in the politics of a court she had begun very successfully to agitate. To this period the cruel distress of the queen's mind may be traced. The conflict between maternal tenderness and what she thought political duty, may be supposed with much greater probability to have produced her fatal derangement, than all the scruples respecting the Aveiro and Tavoura confiscations which the fanatical, interested priest, who succeeded my excellent friend, excited.

I have dried up my tongue almost more times than one, in attempting to argue a thousand silly whimsies and crotchets out of his harum-scarum English brain ; but come," said he, extending his arms, " I bear no malice, I pity, I do not condemn. Let me give you an embrace, and pray God it may not be the last you will receive from me."

It was, alas ! the last I ever received from him, poor, honest-hearted, kind old man ! A sort of melancholy foreboding which seemed to pervade all he said in this interview was too soon realized. The fatal tide of events flowing on as it were with redoubled, tremendous velocity, swept away in the course of a few short months from this period the Prince of Brazil, the lovely and amiable infanta his sister, her husband Don Gabriel of Spain, and the good old King Charles the Third. Not long after, the archbishop-confessor himself was called from the plenitude of power and the enjoyment of unrivalled influence to the presence of that Being in whose sight " no man living shall be justified ;" but as in many trying and peculiar instances he had shown the tenderest mercy, it may tremblingly be hoped that mercy has been shown to him. Notwithstand-

ing the bluntness of his manner, the kindness of his heart, so apparent in his good-humoured, benevolent eye, found its way, almost imperceptibly to himself, to the hearts of others, and tempered the despotic roughness he sometimes assumed both in voice and gesture.

I still seem to behold the last, earnest, solemn look he gave me when, the door closing, he retired to the cares of state, and I with my escort of torch-bearers and dominicans hastened forth to breathe the open air, of which I stood greatly in need. Many things I had heard, and many others I conjectured, above all, the reluctance I felt at the bottom of my heart to leave a country in which I had received such uncommon marks of friendship, bore heavily upon me. When I got home, scarcely two hours before daybreak, and tried to compose myself to sleep, I was neither refreshed nor recruited, but experienced the agitation of feverish and broken slumbers.

LETTER XXXIV.

Dead mass at the church of Martyrs. — Awful music by Perez and Jomelli.—Marialva's affecting address.—My sorrow and anxiety.

26th Nov. 1787.

I WENT to the church of the Martyrs to hear the matins of Perez and the dead mass of Jomelli performed by all the principal musicians of the royal chapel for the repose of the souls of their deceased predecessors. Such august, such affecting music I never heard, and perhaps may never hear again; for the flame of devout enthusiasm burns dim in almost every part of Europe, and threatens total extinction in a very few years. As yet it glows at Lisbon, and produced this day the most striking musical effect.

Every individual present seemed penetrated with the spirit of those awful words which Perez and Jomelli have set with tremendous

sublimity. Not only the music, but the serious demeanour of the performers, of the officiating priests, and indeed of the whole congregation, was calculated to impress a solemn, pious terror of the world beyond the grave. The splendid decoration of the church was changed into mourning, the tribunes hung with black, and a veil of gold and purple thrown over the high altar. In the midst of the choir stood a catafalque surrounded with tapers in lofty candelabra, a row of priests motionless on each side. There was an awful silence for several minutes, and then began the solemn service of the dead. The singers turned pale as they sang, "Timor mortis me conturbat."

After the requiem, the high mass of Jomelli, in commemoration of the deceased, was performed; that famous composition which begins with a movement imitative of the tolling of bells,

"Swinging slow with sullen roar."

These deep, majestic sounds, mingled with others like the cries for mercy of unhappy beings, around whom the shadows of death and the pains of hell were gathering, shook

every nerve in my frame, and called up in my recollection so many affecting images, that I could not refrain from tears.

I scarcely knew how I was conveyed to the palace, where Marialva expected my coming with the utmost impatience. Our conversation took a most serious turn. He entreated me not to forget Portugal, to meditate upon the awful service I had been hearing, and to remember he should not die in peace unless I was present to close his eyes.

In the actual tone of my mind I was doubly touched by this melancholy, affectionate address. It seemed to cut through my soul, and I execrated Verdeil and all those who had been instrumental in persuading me to abandon such a friend. The grand prior wept bitterly at seeing my agitation. Marialva went to the queen, and the grand prior home with me. We dined alone; my heart was full of heaviness, and I could not eat. At night we returned to the palace, and there all my sorrow and anxiety was renewed.

SPAIN.

SPAIN.

LETTER I.

Embark on the Tagus.—Aldea Gallega.—A poetical post-master.—The church.—Leave Aldea Gallega.—Scenery on the road.—Palace built by John the Fifth.—Ruins at Montemor.—Reach Arroyolos.

Wednesday, Nov. 28th, 1787.

The winds are reposing themselves, and the surface of the Tagus has all the smoothness of a mirror. The clouds are dispersing, for it rained heavily in the night, and the sun tinging the distant mountains of Palmella. Charming weather for crossing to Aldea Gallega, that self-same village in whose praises Baretti launches out with so much luxuriance. Horne and his nephew accompanied me to the stairs of Pampulha, where the old marquis's scalera

was waiting for me, with eight-and-twenty rowers in their bright scarlet accoutrements.

Beggars innumerable, blind, dumb, and scabby, followed me almost into the water. No beggars equal those of Portugal for strength of lungs, luxuriance of sores, profusion of vermin, variety and arrangement of tatters, and dauntless perseverance. Several clocks were striking one when we pushed off from the shore, and in a few minutes less than two hours we found ourselves at Aldea Gallega, four leagues from Lisbon. Vast numbers of boats and skiffs passed us in the course of our navigation, which I should have thought highly agreeable in other circumstances; but I felt oppressed and melancholy; the thoughts of my separation from the Marialvas bearing heavily on my mind. Nor could the grand prospects of the river, and its shores, crowded with convents, towers, and palaces, remove this dead cold weight a single instant.

The sun having sunk into watery clouds, the expanse of the Tagus wore a dismal, leaden-coloured aspect. Lisbon was cast into shade, and the huge mass of the convent of San Vicente, crowning an eminence, looked dark and

solemn. The low shores of Aldea Gallega are pleasant and woody; many varieties of the tulip, the iris, and other bulbous roots, already springing up under the protection of spreading pines.

Instead of going to a swinish, stinking estellagem, my courier, Martinho de mello's, prime favourite, and the one he employs upon the most confidential negociations, conducted me to the postmaster's; a neat, snug habitation, where I found very tolerable accommodations, and dined in the midst of a vapour of burnt lavender, that was near depriving us of all appetite.

Before I sat down to table, I wrote to M——, and sent my letter by the return of the scalera. It was not without difficulty I wrote then, or write at present, for my kind host, the postmaster, has not only the same age, but equal glibness of tongue as the abade. They were cotemporary at Coimbra, and their tongues have kept pace with each other these eighty years. The postmaster is blessed with a most tenacious memory, and having been a mighty reader of operas, serenatas, sonnets, and romances, seemed to sweat verses at every pore. For three hours he gave neither himself nor us any respite, but spouted whole volleys of

Metastasio, till he was black in the face. Having washed down the heroic sentiments of Megacle, Artaserse, and Demetrio with a dish of tea, he fell to quoting Spanish and Latin authors, Ovid, Seneca, Lopez de Vega, Calderon, with the same volubility.

As millers sleep sound to the click of their mill, so I, at the end of the two hours' gabbling, was perfectly well-seasoned, and let him run on with the most resigned composure, writing and reading as unconcernedly as if in a convent of Carthusians.

Thursday, November 29th.

There was a continual racket in the house and about the street-door all night. At four o'clock the baggage-carts set forth, with a tremendous jingling of bells. The morning was so soft and vernal, that we drank our chocolate on the veranda, which commands a wild rural view of shrubby fields and scattered pines, terminated by a long range of blue hills, most picturesquely varied in form, if not in colour.

After breakfast I went to the church, which Colmenar pretends is magnificently gilt and ornamented; but which, in fact, can boast no other decoration than a few shabby altars, dis-

playing the images of Nossa Senhora, and the patron saint, in tinselled garments of faded taffeta. I knelt on a mouldy pavement, and felt a chill wind issuing from between the crevices of loose grave-stones, that returned a hollow sound when I rose up and walked over them. A priest, who was saying mass, officiated with uncommon slowness and solemnity. It was hardly light in the recesses of the chapels.

Soon after eight o'clock we left Aldea Gallega, and ploughed through deep furrows of sand at the sober rate of two miles and a half in an hour. On both sides of the heavy road the eye ranges uninterrupted, except by the stems of starveling pines, through a boundless extent of barren country, overgrown with stunted ilex and gum-cistus. The same scenery lasted without any variation full five leagues, to the venta de Pegoens, where I am now writing, in a long dismal room, with plastered walls, a damp brick-floor, and cracked window-shutters. A pack of half-famished dogs are leaping around me, their eyes ready to start out of their sockets and their ribs out of their skin.

After dining upon the provisions we brought with us, of which the yelping generation en-

joyed no inconsiderable share, we proceeded through sandy wilds diversified alone by pines. Not a single habitation occurred, till by a glimmering dubious starlight, for it was now half-past seven, we discovered the extensive front of a palace, built in the year 1729, by John the fifth, for the accommodation of the infanta of Spain, who married his son, the late king D. Josè. Here we were to lodge, and I was rather surprised, upon entering a long suite of well-proportioned apartments, to find doors and windows still capable of being shut and opened, large chimneys guiltless of smoking out of their right channel, and painted ceilings without cracks or crevices.

A young priest, neither deficient in manners nor erudition, the keeper of this solitary palace, did his utmost to make our stay in it agreeable. By his attention, we had some chairs and tables placed by a blazing fire, which I worshipped with all the fervour of an ancient Persian. I had need of this consolation, being much disordered by the tiresome dragging of our heavy coach through heaps of sand, and depressed with feverish shiverings.

Friday, November 30th.

It was a long while last night before I composed myself to sleep, and being called at the first dawn, I rose, if possible, more indisposed than when I lay down; I could scarcely swallow any refreshment, and kept walking disconsolately through the vast range of naked apartments, till the rays of the rising sun entered the windows. The horizon glowed with ruddy clouds. The vast desert levels, discovered from the balconies of the palace, gleamed with dewy verdure. I hastened out to breathe the fresh morning air, impregnated with the perfume of a thousand aromatic shrubs and opening flowers. I could not believe it was the last day of November, but fancied I had slept away the winter, and was just awakened in the month of May.

To enjoy these fragrant breezes in full liberty, I left our carriage to drag along as slowly as the mules pleased, and the muleteers to smoke their cigarros as deliberately as they thought proper; and mounting my horse, rode the best part of the way to Montemor; which is built on the acclivity of a mountain, and surrounded on every side by groves of olives.

The whole face of the country is covered by the same vegetation, and, of course, presents no very cheerful appearance.

About a mile from Montemor we crossed a clear river, whose banks are thick-set with poplars, and a light, airy species of broom, intermixed with indian-fig, and laurustine in full blossom. The bees were swarming amongst the flowers, and filling the air with their hum.

Whilst our dinner was preparing we climbed up the green slopes of a lofty hill, to some ruins on its summit; and passing under a narrow arch discovered a broad flight of steps, which lead to a very ancient church of gothic uncouth architecture: the pavement almost entirely composed of sepulchral slabs and brasses. As we walked on a platform before the entrance, the sun shone so fiercely that we were glad to descend the eminence on its shadiest side, and take refuge in a cavern-like apartment of the estallagem, very damp and dingy; but in which, however, an excellent dinner awaited our arrival.

We set out at two in a blaze of sunshine, so cheerful and reviving, that I got once more on horseback, and never dismounted till I reached

Arroyolos. Just as we came in sight of this ugly old town, which, like Montemor, crowns the summit of a rocky eminence, it fell totally dark; but the postmaster coming forth with torches, lighted us through several winding alleys to his house. I found some pleasant apartments amply furnished, and richly carpeted, and had the comfort of settling myself by a crackling fire, writing to the whole circle of the Marialvas, and drinking tea without being attacked by quotations of Virgil and Metastasio.

LETTER II.

A wild tract of forest-land.—Arrival at Estremoz.—A fair.—An outrageous sermon.—Boundless wastes of gum-cistus.—Elvas.—Our reception there.—My visiters.

Saturday, December 1st, 1787.

HITHERTO I have had no reason to complain of my accommodations in travelling through Portugal. A mandate from the governor procured me milk this morning for my breakfast, much against the will of the proprietor, who had a great inclination to keep all to himself. The idea of its being squeezed out by force, persuaded me that it had a very sour taste, and I hardly touched it.

I laid in a stock of carpets for my journey, of strange grotesque patterns and glaring colours, the produce of a manufactory in this town, which employs about three hundred persons. Methinks I begin to write as dully as

Major W. Dalrymple, whose dry journal of travels through a part of Spain I had the misfortune of reading in the coach this morning, as we jogged and jolted along the dreary road between Arroyolos and Venta do Duque.

We passed a wild tract of forest-land, and saw numerous herds of swine luxuriously scratching themselves against the rugged bark of cork-trees, and routing up the moss at their roots in search of acorns. Venta do Duque is a sty right worthy of being the capital of hoggish dominions. It can boast, however, of a chimney, which, giving us the opportunity of making a fire, rendered our stay in it less intolerable.

The evening turned out cloudy and cold. Before we arrived at Estremoz, another city on a hill, better and farther seen than it merits, it began to rain with a vengeance. I hear it splashing and driving this moment in the puddles which lie in the vast, forlorn market-place, at one end of which our posada is situated. For Portugal, this posada is by no means indifferent; the walls and ceilings have been neatly whitewashed, and here are chairs and tables. My carpets are of essential service in

protecting my feet from the damp brick-floors. I have spread them all round my bed, and they make a flaming exotic appearance.

Sunday, December 2nd.

When I opened my eyes about seven in the morning, the sky was still dismal and lowering; and a crowd of human figures, enveloped in dark capotes, were just issuing from several dens and lurking-places on each side the entrance of the posada. A fair, which was held to-day, had drawn them together, and they were lamenting in chorus the rainy weather, which prevented the display of their rural finery. Most of these good people had passed the night in the stables of the posada. As I came down stairs, I saw several of their companions of both sexes lying about like the killed and wounded on a field of battle; or, to use a less fatal comparison, like the dead-drunk during a contested election in England.

From the windows of the posada I looked down on a vast opening a thousand feet in breadth, surrounded by irregular buildings; amongst which I could not discover any of

those handsome edifices adorned with marble columns, some travelling scribblers mention in terms of the highest commendation. The marble tower, too, they describe, built by Don Deniz, has totally lost its polish, if true it is it ever had any.

Hard by the posada is a little chapel, to which I repaired as soon as I had breakfasted, and heard an outrageous sermon preached by a grey-headed, fiery-eyed capuchin, to a troop of blubbering females.

As it did not positively rain, but only drizzled, after the fashion of my own dear native country, I rode part of the way to Elvas, and traversed boundless wastes of gum-cistus, whose dark-green casts a melancholy shade over the face of the country. A mile or two from Elvas, the scene changes to a forest of olives, with fountains by the wayside, and avenues of poplars, which were not yet deprived of their foliage. Above their summits tower the arches of an aqueduct, supported by strong buttresses, and presenting, when seen in perspective, an appearance, in some points of view, not unlike that of a ruined gothic cathedral. The ram-

parts of Elvas are laid out and planted much in the style of our English gardens, and form very delightful walks.

Upon entering the town, which seems populous and thriving, we were conducted to a very clean neat house, prepared for our reception by order of the governor, Monsieur de Vallarè. A dignified sort of a page, or groom of the chambers, in a blue coat richly laced, and the order of St. Jago dangling at his button-hole, stood ready at the door to show us up stairs, and, according to the Portuguese system of politeness, never quitted our elbows a single moment.

I had hardly reconnoitred my new apartments, before Monsieur de Vallarè was announced. He brought with him the Abade Correa, one of the luminaries of modern Portuguese literature, whose conversation afforded me great amusement. We sallied out together to visit the fortifications, the stables for the cavalry, and barracks for the soldiers, which are all in admirable order; thanks to the governor, who is indefatigable in his exertions, and retains at a very experienced age the agility of five-and-twenty. I was delighted with his

cheerful, military frankness, and unaffected attentions. He told me, he had stood the fire of our formidable column at Fontenoy, and never enjoyed himself so much in his life, as in the smoke and havoc of that furious engagement.

From one of the bastions to which he conducted us, we had a distinct view of the fort de la Lippe, erected at an enormous expense on the summit of a woody mountain. Had the weather been fine, it might have tempted me to climb up to it; but showers beginning to descend, I preferred taking shelter in a snug apartment of the maréchal, enlivened by a blazing pile of aromatic woods, raised up on a grate in a christian-like manner. The abade and I drawing close to this hospitable hearth, talked over Lisbon and its inhabitants; whilst Verdeil amused himself with scrutinizing some minerals the maréchal had collected, and which lay scattered about his room.

In these occupations the time passed till supper. We had pork delicately flavoured, exquisite quails, and salads, prepared in different manners, the most delicious I ever tast-

ed. Our conversation was lively and unrestrained; Correa has an originality of genius and freedom of sentiment, which the terrors of the inquisition have not yet extinguished.

LETTER III.

Pass the rivulet which separates Spain and Portugal.—A muleteer's enthusiasm.—Badajoz.—The cathedral.—Journey resumed.—A vast plain.—Village of Lubaon.—Withered hags.—Names and characters of our mules.—Posada at Merida.

Monday, Dec. 3rd, 1787.

THE maréchal and the abade breakfasted with me, but the rain prevented my taking another walk about the fortifications, and seeing the troops go through their exercise. At ten we set off, well escorted, traversed a dismal plain, and passed a rivulet which separates the two kingdoms. No sooner had one of our muleteers passed this boundary, than cutting a cross in the turf with his knife, he fell prostrate and kissed the ground with a transport of devotion.

Upon ascending the bank of the rivulet we came in sight of Badajoz and its long narrow bridge over the Guadiana. The custom-house was all mildness and moderation. Its harpies

have neither flown away with my books, as Bezerra predicted, nor set their talons in my coffers. At sight of my passport, such a one, I believe, as is not very frequently granted, all difficulties gave way, and I was permitted to enter the lonely, melancholy streets of Badajoz, without being stopped an instant, or having my baggage ransacked.

This circumstance, no wonder, gave me greater satisfaction than the aspect of the town and its inhabitants, which is decidedly gloomy. Every house almost has grated-windows, and the few human creatures that stared at us from them, were muffled up to their noses in heavy mantles of the darkest colours.

We continued winding half an hour in slow and solemn procession through narrow streets and alleys, whose gutters were full to the brim, before we reached the large dingy mansion their excellencies, the governor and intendant, had been so gracious as to allot for my reception. Both these personages were, providentially, laid up with agues, or else, it seems, I should have been honoured with their company the whole evening.

A mob of eyes and mantles, for neither

mouths, arms, nor scarcely legs were discernible, assembled round the carriages the moment they halted, and had the patience to remain in the street, silently smoking their cigarros, the whole time I was at dinner.

It was night before I rose from table, crept down stairs, and, though it continued raining at frequent intervals, waded to the cathedral, through much mire, and between several societies of hogs, which lay sweetly sleeping to the murmur of dropping eaves, in the midst of gutters and kennels.

The cathedral is formed by three aisles of equal breadth, supported by pillars and arches, in a tolerably good pointed style. Several lofty chapels open into them, with solemn gates of iron. In the centre of the middle aisle some bungling architect has awkwardly stuck the choir, not many paces from the principal entrance, and by so doing has shut out the view of the high altar: no great loss, however, the high altar looking little better than a huge mass of rock-work, gilt and burnished. Under the choir is a staircase leading down to the grated entrance of a vault. Lamps were burning before many of the altars, and they dis-

tributed a faint light throughout the whole edifice.

I paced silently to and fro in the aisles, whilst the canons were chaunting vespers. The choristers still retain the same dress in which St. Anthony is represented, in the picture which hung by the miraculous cross he indented when flying the persecutions of Satan. There was a solemnity in the glimmer of the lamps, the gloomy, indefinite depth of the chapels, and the darkness of the vault beneath the choir, that affected me. I passed a very uncomfortable evening, and a worse night.

Tuesday, Dec. 4.

Not a wink of sleep did the musquitos allow me. I was glad to call for lights at four, and was still happier to step into the coach at five; from that hour to half-past-eight I contrived to slumber in a feverish, agitated manner, that did me little good.

When I opened my eyes, I found myself traversing a vast plain as level as the ocean. In summer, this waste must convey none but ideas of sterility and desolation; at present, a fresh verdure, browsed by numerous flocks, rendered

its appearance tolerable. The sheep, which are large and thriving, have fleeces as long and as silky as the hair of a barbet, combed every day by the hands of its mistress. I observed numbers of lambs of the most shining whiteness, with black ears and noses; just such neat little animals as those I remember to have seen in the era of Dresden china, at the feet of smirking shepherdesses.

We dined at a village of mud cottages, called Lubaon, situated on some rising ground, about eighteen miles from Badajoz, whose inhabitants seem to have attained the last stage of poverty and wretchedness. Two or three withered hags, that even in the prophet Habakkuk's resurrection of dry bones, would have attracted attention, laid hold of me the moment I got out of the carriage. I thought the cold hand of the weird sisters was giving me a gripe; and trembled lest, whether I would or not, I might hear some fatal prediction. To get out of their way I flew to the church, an old gothic building, placed on the edge of a steep, which shelves almost perpendicularly down to the banks of the Guadiana, and took sanctuary in its porch. There I remained till

summoned to dinner, listening to the murmur of the distant river flowing round sandy islands.

I won the hearts of my muleteers by caressing their mules, and inquiring with a respectful earnestness their names and characters. Capitana may be depended upon in cases of labour and difficulty; Valerosa is skittish and enterprising; Pelerina rather sluggish and cowardly; but la Commissaria unites every mulish perfection; is tractable, steady, and sure-footed, and at the same time (to use the identical expression of my calasero) the greatest driver of dirt before her in the universe. She is certainly an animal of uncommon resolution; and when tired to death by the slow paces of her companions, how often have I wished myself abandoned to her guidance in a light two-wheeled chaise.

We left Lubaon at half-past two, and, as I had the happiness of sleeping almost the whole way to Merida, can give little account of the country.

I was hardly awake, when we entered the posada at Merida, and started back, dazzled with an illumination of wax-lights, solemnly

stuck in sconces all round a lofty room, with glaring white walls, as if I had been expected to lie in state. In the middle of the apartment stood a large brazier, full of glowing embers, exhaling so strong a perfume of rosemary and lavender, that my head swam, and I reeled like a drunkard. But as soon as this vile machine was removed, I sat down to write in peace and comfort.

LETTER IV.

Arrival at Miaxadas.—Monotonous singing.—Dismal country.—Truxillo.—A rainy morning.—Resume our journey.—Immense wood of cork-trees.—Almaraz.—Reception by the escrivano.—A terrific volume.—Village of Laval de Moral.—Range of lofty mountains.—Calzada.

Wednesday, Dec. 5th, 1787.

About five leagues from Merida we stopped at a hovel too wretched to afford shelter even to our mules. The situation, amidst green hills scattered over with picturesque ilex, is not unpleasant; and such was the mildness of the day, that we spread our table on a knoll, and dined in the open air, surrounded by geese and asses, to whom I distributed ample slices of water-melons. From this spot three short leagues brought us to Miaxadas, where we arrived at night. Its inhabitants were gathered in clusters at their doors, each holding a lamp, and crying, "Biva! Biva!"

Instead of entering a dirty posada, my cou-

rier ushered me into a sort of gallery, with a handsome arched roof, matted all over, and set round with gilt chairs. The donna de la casa made very low obeisances, not without great primness, and her maids sang tirannas with a wailful monotony that wore my very soul out.

Thursday, Dec. 6th.

Soaking rain and dismal country, thick strewn with fragments of rock. Mountains wrapped in mists,—here and there a few green spots studded with mushrooms. We went seven leagues without stopping, and reached Truxillo by four. It was this gloomy city, situated on a black eminence, that gave birth to the ruthless Pizarro, the scourge of the Peruvians, and the murderer of Atabaliba. We were lodged in a very tolerable posada, unmolested by speech-makers, and hear no noise but the trickling of showers.

Friday, Dec. 7th.

I was awakened at five: the gutters were pouring, and all the water-spouts of Truxillo streaming with rain. An hour and a half did

I pass in a ghostly twilight, my candles being packed up, and all the oil of the house expended. It required great exertion on the part of my vigilant courier to prevail on our hulky muleteers to expose themselves to the bad weather.

At length, with much ado, we rumbled out of Truxillo, and after traversing for the space of two leagues the nakedest and most dreary region I ever beheld, a faint gleam of sunshine melted the deadly white of the thick clouds which hung over us, and the horizon brightening up, we discovered a wood of cork-trees interspersed with lawns extending as far as the eye could stretch itself. These green spots continued to occur our whole way to Saraseços. There we halted, dined in haste at not half so wretched a posada as I had been taught to expect, and continuing our route, the sky clearing, ascended a mountain, from whose brow we looked down on a valley variegated with patches of ploughed land, wild shrubberies, and wandering rivulets.

We had not much time to feast our eyes with this pastoral prospect; the clouds soon rolled over it, and we found ourselves in a

damp fog. The rest of our journey to Almaraz was a total blank; we saw nothing and heard nothing, and arrived at the place of our destination in perfect health and stupidity.

The escrivano, who is the judge and jury of the village, was so kind as to accommodate us with his house, and so polite as not to incommode us with his presence. He is a holy man, and a strenuous advocate for the immaculate conception, no less than three large folios upon that mysterious subject lying about in his apartment.

Saturday, Dec. 8th.

Whilst the muleteers were harnessing their beasts together with rotten cords, I took up a little old book of my pious host's, full of the most dismal superstitions, entitled *Espeio de Cristal fino, y Antorcha que aviva el alma,* and read in it till I was benumbed with horror. Many pages are engrossed with a description of the state into which the author imagines we are plunged immediately after death. The body he supposes conscious of all that befalls it in the grave, of exchanging its warm, comfortable habitation for the cold, pestilential soil

of a churchyard, conscious that its friends have abandoned it for ever, and of its inability to call them back; to be sensible of the approaches and progress of the most loathsome corruption, and to hear the voice of an accusing angel, recapitulating its offences, and summoning it to the judgment of God. The book ends with a vehement exhortation to repent while there is yet time, and to procure by fervent prayer, and ample donations to religious communities, the intercession of the host of martyrs and of Nuestra Senora. I can easily conceive these scarecrow publications of infinite use in frightening three parts of mankind out of their senses, prolonging the reign, and swelling the coffers of the clergy.

The horrid images I had seen in this (Espeio) mirror haunted my fancy for several hours. To dissipate them I mounted my horse, and eagerly inhaled the fresh breezes that blew over springing herbage, and wastes of lavender. The birds were singing, the clouds dividing, and discovering long tracts of soft blue sky. I galloped gaily along a level country, interspersed with woods of ilex, to the village of Laval de Moral, where the inhabitants were

most devoutly employed in their churches conciliating the favour of the madonna by keeping holy the festival of the immaculate conception. There the coach coming up with me, I got in; and the mules dragging it along at a rate which in the days of my fire and fury would have made me thump out its bottom with impatience, I fell into a resigned slumber, and am ignorant of every object between Laval de Moral and Calzada, in sight of which town I awoke near five in the evening.

The sun was setting in a sea of molten gold, and tinging the snows of a range of lofty mountains, which I discovered for the first time bounding our horizon. I might have seen them before most probably, had they not remained till this evening wrapped up in rainy vapours.

It is at their base the Escurial is situated. I had the consolation of stepping out of the coach at Calzada into a house with cheerful, neat apartments, with an open gallery, where I walked contemplating the red streams of light, and brilliant skirted clouds of the western sky, till dinner came upon table. Though the doors and windows were all wide open, I suffered no

inconvenience worth mentioning from cold The master of the house, a portly, pompous barber-surgeon, most firm in his belief of the supremacy of Spain over every country in the universe, confessed, however, the weather was uncommonly warm, and that so mild a month of December was rather extraordinary.

LETTER V.

Sierra de los Gregos.—Mass.—Oropeza.—Talavera.—Drawling tirannas.—Talavera de la Reyna.—Reception at Santa Olaya. — The lady of the house, and her dogs and dancers.

Sunday, December 9th, 1787.

THE mountains I saw yesterday are called the Sierra de los Gregos, and the winds that blow over their summits begin to chill the atmosphere; but the sun is shining gloriously, and not a cloud obscures his effulgence. The stars were still twinkling in the firmament, when I was attracted to mass in the large gloomy church of a nunnery, by the voices of the Lord's spouses issuing from a sepulchral grate bristled with spikes of iron. These tremulous, plaintive sounds filled me with such sadness, and so many recollections of interesting hours departed never to return, that I felt relieved when I found myself out of sight of

the convent, on a cheerful road thronged with passengers.

We passed Oropeza, a picturesque, italian-looking town, on the brow of a mountain; dined at a venda, in the midst of a savage tract of forest-land, infamous till within this year or two for robberies and assassinations; and reached Talavera de la Reyna by sunset.

More, I believe, has been said in praise of this town than it deserves. Its appearance is far from cheerful or elegant; and the heavy brick-fronts of the convents and churches as ill designed as executed. The streets, however, are crowded with people, who seem to be moving about with rather more activity than falls to the lot of Spaniards in general. I am told the silk-manufactories at Talavera are in a flourishing state, and have taken a good many hands out of the folds of their mantles.

Colmenar is perpetually leading me into errors, and causing me disappointments. He pretends that the inhabitants of this place are nearly as skilful as those of Pekin and Macao in the manufacturing of lacquered wares, and that their pottery is unrivalled; but, upon inquiry, I found the Talaverans no particular

proficients in varnish, and that they had neither a cup nor basin to produce in the least preferable to those of other villages.

In one art they are indefatigable, I can answer to my sorrow; that is, singing drawling tirannas to the monotonous accompaniment of a sort of hum-strum or hurdy-gurdy, or the devil knows best what sort of instruments, for such as I hear at this moment under my windows are only fit to be played in his dominions. I am quite at the mercy of these untoward minstrels; if they cease not, I must defer sleeping to another opportunity. Am I then come into Spain to hear hum-strums and hurdy-gurdies? Where are the rapturous seguidillas, of which I have been told such wonders? Do they exist, or, like the japanned wares of the Talaverans, are they only to be found in books of travels and geographical dictionaries?

Monday, December 10th.

I beg Talavera de la Reyna a thousand pardons; it is not quite so frightful as it appeared in the twilight of yesterday evening. Many of the houses have a palace-like appearance, and the interior of the old gothic cathedral, though

not remarkably spacious, has an air of magnificence; the stalls of the choir are elaborately carved, and on each side the high altar, curtains of the richest crimson damask fall from the roof in ample folds, and cast a ruddy glow on the pavement.

If Talavera has nothing within its walls to be much boasted of, there are many objects in its environs that merit praise. No sooner had we left its dark crooked streets behind us, than we discovered a thick wood of elms skirting an extensive lawn, beautifully green and level, from which rises the convent of Nuestra Señora del Prayo, crowned by an octangular cupola. This edifice is built of brick encrusted with stone ornaments, and choked up by ranges of arcades and heavy galleries. I have seen several structures which resembled it in the neighbourhood of Antwerp and Brussels; but whether the Spaniards carried this clumsy style of architecture into the Low Countries, or borrowed from thence, is scarcely worth while to determine.

Not far from Nuestra Señora del Prayo we crossed the Tagus, and continued dragging through heavy sands for five tedious hours,

without perceiving a habitation, or meeting any animal, biped or quadruped, except herds of swine, in which, I believe, consist the principal riches of this part of the Spanish dominions. I doubt whether the royal sty of Ithaca was half so well garnished, as many private ones in New Castile and Estremadura.

Having nothing to look at except a dreary plain bounded by barren, uninteresting mountains, I was reduced to tumble over the trashy collection of books, with which I happen in this journey to be provided; poor fiddle-faddle Derrick's Letters from Cork, Chester, and Tunbridge; John Buncle, Esquire's, life, holy rhapsodies, and peregrinations; Shenstone's, Mr. Whistler's, and the good Duchess of Somerset's Correspondence; Bray's tour, right worthy of an ass; Heley's fulsome description of the Leasowes and Hagley; Clarke's ponderous account of Spain; and Major Dalrymple's dry, tiresome, and splenetic excursion. There's a set, equal it if you can. I hope to get a better at Madrid, and throw my old stock into the Mançanares.

We dined at a village called Brabo, not in the least worth mentioning, and arrived in due

tiresome course, about six in the evening, at Santa Olaya, where my courier had procured us an admirable lodging in the house of a veteran colonel. The principal apartment, in which I pitched my bed, was a lofty gallery, with large folding glazed doors, gilt and varnished, its white walls almost covered with saintly pictures and small mirrors, stuck near the ceiling, beyond the reach of mortal sight, as if their proprietor was afraid they would wear out by being looked into. On low tables, to the right and left of the door, stood glass-cases, filled with relics and artificial flowers. Stools covered with velvet, and raised not above a foot from the floor, were stationed all round the room. On one of these I squatted like an oriental, warming my hands over a brasier of coals.

The old lady of the house, followed by a train of curtseying handmaids and snifling lapdogs, favoured me with her company the best part of the evening. Her spouse, the colonel, being indisposed, did not make his appearance. Whilst she was entertaining me with a most flourishing detail of the excellent qualities and wonderful acquisitions of the

infant Don Louis, who died about two years ago at his villa in this neighbourhood, some very grotesque figures entered the antechamber, and tinkling their guitars, struck up a seguidilla, that in a minute or two set all the feet in the house in motion. Amongst the dancers, two young girls, whose jetty locks were braided with some degree of elegance, shone forth in a fandango, beating the ground and snapping their fingers with rapturous agility.

This sport lasted a full hour, before they showed the least sign of being tired; then succeeded some languorous tirannas, by no means so delightful as I expected. I was not sorry when the ball ceased, and my kind hostess, moving off with all her dogs and dancers, left me to sup and sleep in tranquillity.

LETTER VI.

Dismal plains.—Santa Cruz.—Val de Carneiro.—A most determined musical amateur.—The Alcayde Mayor.—Approach to Madrid.—Aspect of the city.—The Calle d'Alcala.—The Prado.—The Ave-Maria bell.

Tuesday, Dec. 11th, 1787.

Dismal plains and still more dismal mountains; no indication as yet of the approach to a capital; dined at Santa Cruz; thought we should have been flayed alive by its greedy inhabitants; arrived in the dark at Val de Carneiro; lodged in the house of a certain Don Bernardo, passionately fond of music. The apartment allotted to me contained no less than two harpsichords: one of them, in a fine gilt case, very pompous and sullen, I could scarcely prevail upon the keys to move; next it stood a very sweet-toned modest little spinet, that responded to my touch right will-

ingly, and as I happened to play some Brazilian ditties Don Bernardo never heard before, he was so good as to be in raptures.

These were becoming every minute more enthusiastic, when the arrival of the alcayde mayor, followed by a priest or two with enormous spectacles on their thin snipish noses, interrupted our harmonious proceedings. This personage came expressly to pay me a visit, and to ask questions about England and her unnatural offspring, the revolted provinces of North America; a country which he had heard was colder and darker than the grave, and spread all over with animals, whether biped or quadruped he could not tell, called *koakeres*, living like beavers, in strange huts or tabernacles of their own construction.

Wednesday, Dec. 12th.

Don Bernardo showed me his cellars, in which are several casks capable of holding thirty or forty hogsheads, and ranges of jars in the shape of the antique amphoræ, ten feet high, and not less than six in diameter. For the first time in my life I tasted the genuine Spanish

chocolate, spiced and cinnamoned beyond all endurance. It has put my mouth in a flame, and I do nothing but spit and sputter.

The weather was so damp and foggy that we could hardly see ten yards before us: I cannot, therefore, in conscience abuse the approach to Madrid so much, I believe, as it deserves. About one o'clock, the vapours beginning to dissipate, a huge mass of building, and a confused jumble of steeples, domes, and towers, started on a sudden from the mist. The large building I soon recognized to be the new palace. It is a good deal in the style of Caserta, but being raised on a considerable eminence, produces a more striking effect. At its base flows the pitiful river Mançanares, whose banks were all of a flutter with linen hanging out to dry.

We passed through this rag-fair, between crowds of mahogany-coloured hags, who left off thumping their linen to stare at us, and, crossing a broad bridge over a narrow streamlet, entered Madrid by a gateway of very indifferent architecture. The neat pavement of the streets, the loftiness of the houses, and

the cheerful showy appearance of many of the shops, far surpassed my expectation.

Upon entering the Calle d'Alcala, a noble street, much wider than any in London, I was still more surprised. Several magnificent palaces and convents adorn it on both sides. At one extremity, you perceive the trees and fountains of the Prado, and, at the other, the lofty domes of a series of churches. We have got apartments at the Cruz de Malta, which, though very indifferently furnished, have at least the advantage of commanding this prospect. I passed half-an-hour after dinner in one of the balçonies, gazing upon the variety of equipages which were rattling along. The street sloping gradually down, and being paved with remarkable smoothness, they drove at a furious rate, the high fashion at Madrid; where to hurry along at the risk of laming your mules, and cracking their skulls, is to follow the example of his Majesty, than whom no monarch drives with greater vehemence.

I strolled to the Prado, and was much struck by the spaciousness of the principal walk, the length of the avenues, and the stateliness of

the fountains. Though the evening was damp and gloomy, a great many people were rambling about, and a long line of carriages parading. The dress of the ladies, the cut of their servants' liveries, the bags of the coachmen, and the painting of the coaches, were so perfectly Parisian, that I fancied myself on the Boulevards, and looked in vain for those ponderous equipages, surrounded by pages and escudeiros, one reads of in Spanish romances. A total change has taken place, and the original national customs are almost obliterated.

Devotion, however, is not yet banished from the Prado; at the ringing of the Ave-Maria bell, the coaches stopped, the servants took off their hats, the ladies crossed themselves, and the foot passengers stood motionless, muttering their orisons. There is both opera and play to-night, I believe, but I am in no mood to go to either.

LETTER VII.

The Duchess of Berwick in all her nonchalance.—Her apartment described.—Her passion for music.—Her señoras de honor.

Thursday, Dec. 13th, 1787.

It was a heavy damp morning, and I could hardly prevail upon myself to quit my fireside and deliver the archbishop's most confidential despatches to the Portuguese ambassador Don Diogo de Noronha.

The ambassador being gone to the palace, I drove to the Duchess of Berwick's, my old acquaintance, with whom I passed so much of my time at Paris eight years ago. Her dear spouse, so well known at Spa, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, and all the gaming-places of Europe, by the name, style, and title of marquis of Jamaica, has been departed these five or six months; and she is now mistress of the most splendid palace in Madrid, of one of the first fortunes, and of the affairs of her only son, the

present Duke of Berwick, to whom she is guardian.

The façade of the palace, and the spacious court before it, pleased me extremely. It is in the best style of modern Parisian architecture, simple and graceful. I was conducted up a majestic staircase, adorned with corinthian columns, and through a long suite of apartments, at the extremity of which, in a saloon hung with embroidered india satin, sat reclined madame la duchesse, in all her accustomed nonchalance. She seemed never to have moved from her sofa since I last had the pleasure of seeing her, and is exactly the same good-natured, indolent being, free from malice or uncharitableness; I wish the world was fuller of this harmless, quiet species.

The morning passed most rapidly away in talking over rose-coloured times; I returned home to dine, and as soon as it was dark went back again to madame de Berwick's, who was waiting tea for me. I like her apartment very much, the angles are taken off by low semicircular sofas, and the space between them and the hangings filled up with slabs of granadian marble, on which are placed

most beautiful porcelain vases with mignonette and rose-trees in full bloom. The fire burnt cheerfully, the table was drawn close to it; the duchess's little girl, Donna Ferdinanda, sat playing and smiling upon a dog, which she held in her lap, and had swaddled up like an infant.

Soon after tea, the young duke of Berwick and a French abbé, his preceptor, came in and stayed with us the remainder of the evening. The duke is only fourteen and some months, but he is taller than I am, and as plump as the plumpest of partridges. His manners are French, and his address as prematurely formed as his figure. Few, if any, fortunes in Europe equal that which he enjoys, and of which he has expectations; being heir to the house of Alba, seventy thousand a-year at least, and in possession of the Veragua and Liria estates. These immense properties are of course underlet, and wretchedly cultivated. If able exertions were made in their management, his income might be doubled.

Madame de Berwick has not lost her passion for music; operas and sonatas lie scattered all over her apartment; not only singing-books

were lying on the carpet, but singers themselves; three of her musical attendants, a page, and two pretty little señoras de honor, having cast themselves carelessly at her feet in the true Spanish, or rather morisco, fashion, ready to warble forth the moment she gave the signal, which was not long delayed, and never did I hear more soothing voices. The inspiration they gave rise to drove me to the piano-forte, where I played and sang those airs Madame de Berwick was so fond of in the dawn of our acquaintance; when, thanks to her cherished indolence, she had the resignation to listen day after day, and hour after hour, to my romantic rhapsodies. How fervid and ecstatic was I in those days; the toy of every impulse, the willing dupe of every gay illusion. The duchess tells me, she thinks from the tone of our conversation in the morning, that I am now a little sobered, and may possibly get through this thorny world without losing my wits on its briars.

LETTER VIII.

The Chevalier de Roxas.—Excursion to the palace and gardens of the Buen Retiro.—The Turkish Ambassador and his numerous train.—Farinelli's apartments.

Dec. 14th, 1785.

One of the best informed and pleasantest of Spaniards, the Chevalier de Roxas, who had been very intimate both with Verdeil and me at Lausanne, came in a violent hurry this morning to give us a cordial embrace. He seems to have set his heart upon showing us about Madrid, and rendering our stay here as lively as he could make it. Fifty schemes did he propose in half a minute, of visiting museums, churches, and public buildings; of goings to balls, theatres, and tertullias.

I took alarm at this busy prospect, drew back into my shell, and began wishing myself in the most perfect incognito; but, alas! to no purpose, it was all in vain.

Roxas, most eager to enter upon his office of cicerone, fidgeted to the window, observed we had still an hour or two of daylight, and proposed an excursion to the palace and gardens of the Buen Retiro. Upon entering the court of the palace, which is surrounded by low buildings, with plastered fronts, sadly battered by wind and weather, I espied some venerable figures in caftans and turbans, leaning against a doorway.

My sparks of orientalism instantly burst into a flame at such a sight: "Who are those picturesque animals?" said I to our conductor. "Is it lawful to approach them?" "As often as you please," answered Roxas. "They belong to the Turkish ambassador, who is lodged, with all his train, at the Buen Retiro, in the identical apartments once occupied by Farinelli; where he held his state levees and opera rehearsals; drilling ministers one day, and tenors and soprani the other: if you have a mind, we will go up-stairs and examine the whole menagerie."

No sooner said, no sooner done. I cleared four steps at a leap, to the great delight of his sublime excellency's pages and attendants, and

entered a saloon spread with the most sumptuous carpets, and perfumed with the fragrance of the wood of aloes. In a corner of this magnificent chamber sat the ambassador, Achmet Vassif Effendi, wrapped up in a pelisse of the most precious sables, playing with a light cane he had in his hand, and every now and then passing it under the noses of some tall, handsome slaves, who were standing in a row before him. These figures, fixed as statues, and to all appearance equally insensible, neither moved hand nor eye. As I advanced to make my salam to the grand seignor's representative, who received me with a most gracious nod of the head; his interpreter announced to what nation I belonged, and my own individual warm partiality for the Sublime Porte.

As soon as I had taken my seat in a ponderous fauteuil of figured velvet, coffee was carried round in cups of most delicate china, with gold enamelled saucers. Notwithstanding my predilection for the east and its customs, I could hardly get this beverage down, it was so thick and bitter; whilst I was making a few wry faces in consequence, a low murmuring sound, like that of flutes and dulcimers, accom-

panied by a sort of tabor, issued from behind a curtain which separated us from another apartment. There was a melancholy wildness in the melody, and a continual repetition of the same plaintive cadences, that soothed and affected me.

The ambassador kept poring upon my countenance, and appeared much delighted with the effect his music seemed to produce upon it. He is a man of considerable talent, deeply skilled in Turkish literature; a native of Bagdad; rich, munificent, and nobly born, being descended from the house of Barmek; gracious in his address, smooth and plausible in his elocution; but not without something like a spark of despotism in a corner of his eye. Now and then I fancied that the recollection of having recommended the bow-string, and certain doubts whether he might not one day or other be complimented with it in his turn, passed across his venerable and interesting physiognomy.

My eager questions about Bagdad, the tomb of Zobeida, the vestiges of the Dhar al Khalifat, or palace of the Abbassides, seemed to excite a thousand remembrances which gave him

pleasure; and when I added a few quotations from some of his favourite authors, particularly Mesihi, he became so flowingly communicative, that a shrewd dapper Greek, called Timoni, who acted as his most confidential interpreter, could hardly keep pace with him.

Had not the hour of prayer arrived, our conversation might have lasted till midnight. Rising up with much stateliness, he extended his arms to bid me a good evening, and was assisted along by two good-looking Georgian pages, to an adjoining chamber, where his secretaries, dragoman, and attendants, were all assembled to perform their devotions, each on his little carpet, as if in a mosque; and it was not unedifying to witness the solemnity and abstractedness with which these devotions were performed.

LETTER IX.

The Museum and Academy of Arts.—Scene on the Prado.—The Portuguese Ambassador and his comforters.—The Theatre.—A highly popular dancer.—Seguidillas in all their glory.

Sunday, Dec. 16th, 1787.

THE kind, indefatigable Roxas came to conduct us to the Museum and Academy of Arts. It consists of seven or eight apartments, with cases all around them, in a plain, good style; the objects clearly arranged, and exposed to view in a very intelligible manner. There is a vast collection of minerals, corals, madrepores, and stalactites, from all the grottoes in the universe; and curious specimens of virgin-gold and silver. Amongst the latter, a lump weighing seventy pounds, which was shivered off an enormous mass by a master miner, who, after dining on it, with twelve or thirteen persons, hacked it to pieces, and distributed the fragments amongst his guests.

What pleased me most was a collection of Peruvian vases; a polished stone, which served the Incas for a mirror; and a linen mantle, which formerly adorned their copper-coloured shoulders, as finely woven as a shawl, and flowered in very nearly a similar manner, the colours as fresh and vivid as if new.

In the apartments of the academy is a most valuable collection of casts after the serene and graceful antique, and several fierce, obtrusive daubings by modern Spanish artists.

I found our acute, intelligent chargé-d'affaires'* card lying on my table when I got home, and a great many more, of equal whiteness; such a sight chills me like a fall of snow, for I think of the cold idleness of going about day after day dropping little bits of pasteboard in return. Verdeil and I dined tête-à-tête, planning schemes how to escape formal fussifications. No easy matter, I suspect, if I may judge from appearances.

Our repast and our council over, we hurried to the Prado, where a brilliant string of equipages was moving along in two files. In the

* A well-known wily diplomatist, afterwards ambassador at Constantinople.

middle paraded the state coaches of the royal family, containing their own precious selves, and their wonted accompaniment of bedchamber lords and ladies, duly bedizened. It was a gay spectacle; the music of the Swiss guards playing, and the evening sun shining bright on their showy uniforms. The botanic garden is separated from the walk by magnificent railings and pilasters, placed at regular distances, crowned with vases of aloes and yuccas. The verdure and fountains of this vast enclosure, terminated by a range of columned conservatories, with an entrance of very majestic architecture, has a delightful and striking effect.

From the Prado I drove to the Portuguese ambassador's, who is laid up with a sore toe. Three diplomatic animals, two males and one female, were nursing and comforting him. He is most supremely dull, and so are his comforters. One of them in particular, who shall be nameless, quite asinine.

The little sympathy I feel for creatures of this genus, made me shorten my visit as much as I decently could, and return home to take up Roxas, who was waiting to accompany us to the Spanish theatre. They were acting the

Barber of Seville, with Paesiello's music, and singing better than at the opera. The entertainment ended with a sort of intermez, very characteristic of Spanish manners in low life; in which were introduced seguidillas. One of the dancers, a young fellow, smartly dressed as a maxo, so enraptured the audience, that they made him repeat his dance four times over; a French dancing-master would have absolutely shuddered at the manner in which he turned in his knees. The women sit by themselves in a gallery as dingy as limbo, wrapped up in their white mantillas, and looking like spectres. I never heard anything like the yociferation with which the pit called out for the seguidillas, nor the frantic, deafening applause they bestowed on their favourite dancer.

The play ended at eight, and we came back to tea by our fireside.

LETTER X.

Visit to the Escurial.—Imposing site of that regal convent.—Reception by the Mystagogue of the place.—Magnificence of the choir.—Charles the Fifth's organ.—Crucifix by Cellini.—Gorgeous ceiling painted by Luca Giordano.—Extent and intricacy of the stupendous edifice.

Thursday, Dec. 19th, 1787.

I HATE being roused out of bed by candle-light on a sharp wintry morning; but as I had fixed to-day for visiting the Escurial, and had stationed three relays on the road, in order to perform the journey expeditiously, I thought myself obliged to carry my plan into execution.

The weather was cold and threatening, the sky red and deeply coloured. Roxas was to be of our party, so we drove to his brother, the Marquis of Villanueva's, to take him up. He is one of the best-natured and most friendly of human beings, and I would not have gone without him upon any account; though in

general I abhor turning and twisting about a town in search of any body, let its soul be never so transcendent.

It was past eight before we issued out of the gates of Madrid, and rattled along an avenue on the banks of the Mançanares full gallop, which brought us to the Casa del Campo, one of the king's palaces, wrapped up in groves and thickets. We continued a mile or two by the wall of this enclosure, and leaving La Sarsuela, another royal villa, surrounded by shrubby hillocks, on the right, traversed three or four leagues of a wild, naked country, and, after ascending several considerable eminences, the sun broke out, the clouds partially rolled away, and we discovered the white buildings of this far-famed monastery, with its dome and towers detaching themselves from the bold background of a lofty, irregular mountain.

We were now about a league off: the country wore a better aspect than near Madrid. To the right and left of the road, which is of a noble width, and perfectly well made, lie extensive parks of greensward, scattered over with fragments of rock and stumps of oak and

ash-trees. Numerous herds of deer were standing stock-still, quietly lifting up their innocent noses, and looking us full in the face with their beautiful eyes, secure of remaining unmolested, for the King never permits a gun to be discharged in these enclosures.

The Escurial, though overhung by melancholy mountains, is placed itself on a very considerable eminence, up which we were full half an hour toiling, the late rains having washed this part of the road into utter confusion. There is something most severely impressive in the façade of this regal convent, which, like the palace of Persepolis, is overshadowed by the adjoining mountain; nor did I pass through a vaulted cloister into the court before the church, solid as if hewn out of a rock, without experiencing a sort of shudder, to which no doubt the vivid recollection of the black and blood-stained days of our gloomy queen Mary's husband not slightly contributed. The sun being again overcast, the porches of the church, surmounted by grim statues, appeared so dark and cavern-like, that I thought myself about to enter a subterraneous temple set apart for the service of some mysterious and terrible

religion. And when I saw the high altar, in all its pomp of jasper-steps, ranks of columns one above the other, and paintings filling up every interstice, full before me, I felt completely awed.

The sides of the recess, in which this imposing pile is placed, are formed by lofty chapels, almost entirely occupied by catafalques of gilt enamelled bronze. Here, with their crowns and sceptres humbly prostrate at their feet, bare-headed and unhelmed, kneel the figures, large as life, of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and his imperious son, the second Philip, accompanied by those of their unhappy consorts and ill-fated children. My sensations of dread and dreariness were not diminished upon finding myself alone in such company; for Roxas had left me to deliver some letters to his right reverence the prior, which were to open to us all the arcana of this terrific edifice, at once a temple, a palace, a convent, and a tomb.

Presently my amiable friend returned, and with him a tall old monk, with an ash-coloured forbidding countenance, and staring eyes, the expression of which was the farthest removed possible from anything like cordiality.

This was the mystagogue of the place—the prior *in propria persona,* the representative of St. Jerome, as far as this monastery and its domain was concerned, and a disciplinarian of celebrated rigidness. He began examining me from head to foot, and, after what I thought rather a strange scrutiny, asked me in broad Spanish what I wished particularly to see. Then turning to Roxas, said loud enough for me to hear him, "He is very young; does he understand what I say to him? But, as I am peremptorily commanded to show him about, I suppose I must comply, though I am quite unused to the office of explaining our curiosities. However, if it must be, it must; so let us begin, and not dally. I have no time to spare, you well know, and have quite enough to do in the choir and the convent."

After this not very gracious exordium, we set forth on our tour. First we visited some apartments with vaulted roofs, painted in arabesque, in the finest style of the sixteenth century; and then a vast hall, which had been used for the celebration of mass, whilst the great church was building, where I saw the Perla in all its purity, the most delicately-

finished work of Raphael, the Pesce, with its divine angel, graceful infant; and devout young Tobit, breathing the very soul of pious, unaffected simplicity. My attention was next attracted by that most profoundly pathetic of pictures, Jacob weeping over the bloody garment of his son; the loftiest proof in existence of the extraordinary powers of Velasquez in the noblest work of art.

These three pictures so absorbed my admiration, that I had little left for a host of glorious performances by Titian and the highest masters, which cover the plain, massive walls of these conventual rooms with a paradise of glowing colours; so I passed along almost as rapidly as my grumbling cicerone could desire, and followed him up several flights of stairs, and through many and many an arched passage and vestibule, all of the sternest doric, into the choir, which is placed over the grand western entrance, right opposite, at the distance of more than two hundred feet, to the high altar and its solemn accompaniments. No regal chamber I ever beheld can be compared, in point of sober harmonious majesty, to this apartment, which looks more as if it belonged to a palace than

to a church. The series of stalls, designed in a severer taste than was common in the sixteenth century, are carved out of the most precious woods the Indies could furnish. At the extremity of this striking perspective of onyx-coloured seats, columns, and canopies, appears suspended upon a black velvet pall that revered image of the crucified Saviour, formed of the purest ivory, which Cellini seems to have sculptured in moments of devout rapture and inspiration. It is by far his finest work; his Perseus, at Florence, is tame and laboured in comparison.

In a long narrow corridor which runs behind the stalls, panelled all over like an inlaid cabinet, I was shown a beautiful little organ, in a richly chased silver case, which accompanied Charles the fifth in his African expedition, and must often have gently beguiled the cares of empire, for he played on it, tradition says, almost every evening. That it is worth playing upon even now I can safely vouch, for I never touched any instrument with a tone of more delicious sweetness; and touch it I did, though my austere conductor, the sour-visaged

prior, looked doubly forbidding on the occasion.

The stalls I have just mentioned are much less ornamented than those I have seen in Pavia, and many other monasteries; the ceiling of this noblest of choirs, displays the utmost exuberance of decoration—the richest and most gorgeous of spectacles, the heavens and all the powers therein. Imagination can scarcely conceive the pomp and prodigality of pencil with which Luca Giordano has treated this subject, and filled every corner of the vast space it covers with well-rounded forms, that seem actually starting from the glowing clouds with which they are environed.

"Is not this fine?" said the monk; "you can have nothing like it in your country. And now be pleased to move forward, for the day is wasting, and you will have little time left to examine our inestimable relics, and the jewelled shrines in which they are deposited."

We went down from the choir, I can scarcely tell whither, such is the extent and intricacy of this stupendous edifice. We passed, I believe, through some of the lateral chapels of

the great church, into several quadrangles, one in particular, with a fountain under a cupola in the centre, surrounded by doric arcades, equal in justness of proportion and architectural terseness to Palladio's court in the convent of S. Giorgio Maggiore.

LETTER XI.

Mysterious cabinets.—Relics of Martyrs.—A feather from the Archangel Gabriel's wing.—Labyrinth of gloomy cloisters.—Sepulchral cave.—River of death.—The regal sarcophagi.

My lord the prior, not favouring a prolonged survey, I reluctantly left this beautiful court, and was led into a low gallery, roofed and wainscoted with cedar, lined on both sides by ranges of small doors of different-coloured Brazil-wood, looking in appearance, at least, as solid as marble. Four sacristans, and as many lay-brothers, with large lighted flambeaux of yellow wax in their hands, and who, by the by, never quitted us more the remainder of our peregrinations, stood silent as death, ready to unlock those mysterious entrances.

The first they opened exhibited a buffet, or *credence*, three stories high, set out with many

a row of grinning skulls, looking as pretty as gold and diamonds could make them; the second, every possible and impossible variety of odds and ends, culled from the carcasses of martyrs; the third, enormous ebony presses, the secrets of which I begged for pity's sake might not be intruded upon for my recreation, as I began to be heartily wearied of sight-seeing; but when my conductors opened the fourth mysterious door, I absolutely shrank back, almost sickened by a perfume of musk and ambergris.

A spacious vault was now disclosed to me—one noble arch, richly panelled: had the pavement of this strange-looking chamber been strewn with saffron, I should have thought myself transported to the enchanted courser's forbidden stable we read of in the tale of the Three Calenders.

The prior, who is not easily pleased, seemed to have suspicions that the seriousness of my demeanour was not entirely orthodox; I overheard him saying to Roxas, "Shall I show him the Angel's feather? you know we do not display this our most-valued, incomparable relic to everybody, nor unless upon special

occasions." — "The occasion is sufficiently special," answered my partial friend; "the letters I brought to you are your warrant, and I beseech your reverence to let us look at this gift of heaven, which I am extremely anxious myself to adore and venerate."

Forth stalked the prior, and drawing out from a remarkably large cabinet an equally capacious sliding shelf—(the source, I conjecture, of the potent odour I complained of)—displayed lying stretched out upon a quilted silken mattress, the most glorious specimen of plumage ever beheld in terrestrial regions—a feather from the wing of the Archangel Gabriel, full three feet long, and of a blushing hue more soft and delicate than that of the loveliest rose. I longed to ask at what precise moment this treasure beyond price had been dropped—whether from the air—on the open ground, or within the walls of the humble tenement at Nazareth; but I repressed all questions of an indiscreet tendency—the why and wherefore, the when and how, for what and to whom such a palpable manifestation of archangelic beauty and wingedness had been vouchsafed.

We all knelt in silence, and when we rose up after the holy feather had been again deposited in its perfumed lurking-place, I fancied the prior looked doubly suspicious, and uttered a sort of *humph* very doggedly; nor did his ill-humour evaporate upon my desiring to be conducted to the library. "It is too late for you to see the precious books and miniatures by daylight," replied the crusty old monk, "and you would not surely have me run the risk of dropping wax upon them. No, no, another time, another time, when you come earlier. For the present, let us visit the tomb of the catholic kings; there, our flambeaux will be of service without doing injury."

He led the way through a labyrinth of cloisters, gloomy as the grave; till ordering a grated door to be thrown open, the light of our flambeaux fell upon a flight of most beautiful marble steps, polished as a mirror, leading down between walls of the rarest jaspers to a portal of no great size, but enriched with balusters of rich bronze, sculptured architraves, and tablets of inscriptions, in a style of the greatest magnificence.

As I descended the steps, a gurgling sound, like that of a rivulet, caught my ear. "What means this?" said I. "It means," answered the monk, "that the sepulchral cave on the left of the stairs, where repose the bodies of many of our queens and infantas, is properly ventilated, running water being excellent for that purpose." I went on, not lulled by these rippling murmurs, but chilled when I reflected through what precincts flows this river of death.

Arrived at the bottom of the stairs, we passed through the portal just mentioned, and entered a circular saloon, not more than five-and-thirty feet in diameter, characterized by extreme elegance, not stern solemnity. The regal sarcophagi, rich in golden ornaments, ranged one above the other, forming panels of the most decorative kind; the lustre of exquisitely sculptured bronze, the pavement of mottled alabaster; in short, this graceful dome, covered with scrolls of the most delicate foliage, appeared to the eye of my imagination more like a subterranean boudoir, prepared by some gallant young magician for the reception of an enchanted and enchanting

princess, than a temple consecrated to the king of terrors.

My conductor's visage growing longer and longer every minute, and looking pretty nearly as grim as that of the last-mentioned sovereign, I whispered Roxas it was full time to take our leave; which we did immediately after my intimating that express desire, to the no small satisfaction, I am perfectly convinced, of my lord the prior.

Cold and hungry, for we had not been offered a morsel of refreshment, we repaired to a warm opulent-looking habitation belonging to one of my kind companion's most particular friends, a much favoured attendant of his catholic Majesty's; here we were received with open arms and generous hospitality; and it grew pitch dark before we quitted this comfortable shelter from the piercing winds, which blow almost perpetually over the Escurial, and returned to Madrid.

LETTER XII.

A concert and ball at Senhor Pacheco's.—Curious assemblage in his long pompous gallery.—Deplorable ditty by an eastern dilettante.—A bolero in the most rapturous style.—Boccharini in despair.—Solecisms in dancing.

THE mules galloped back at so rapid a rate, and their conductors bawled and screamed so lustily to encourage their exertions, that half my recollections of the Escurial were whirled out of my head before I reached my old quarters at the Cruz de Malta. I had quite forgotten, amongst other things, that I had actually accepted a most pressing invitation to a concert and ball at Pacheco's this very evening.

Pacheco is an old Portuguese, immensely rich, and who had been immensely favoured

in the days of his youth by his august countrywoman, Queen Barbara, the consort of Ferdinand the sixth, and the patroness of Farinelli. He is uncle to madame Arriaga, her most Faithful Majesty's most faithful and favourite attendant, and a person of such worship, that courtiers, ministers, and prelates, are too happy to congregate at his house, whenever he takes it into his head to allow them an opportunity.

Though I had been half petrified by my cold ramble through the Escurial, under the prior's still more chilling auspices, I had quite life enough left to obey Pacheco's summons with alacrity; and as I expected to dance a great deal, I put on my dancing-dress, that of a maxo, with ties and tags, and trimmings and buttons, redecilla and all.

I must confess, however, that I felt rather abashed and disappointed, upon entering Pacheco's long pompous gallery, to find myself in the midst of diplomatic and ministerial personages, assembled in stiff gala to do honour to Achmet Vassif, whose musicians were seated on the carpet howling forth a deplorable ditty,

composed, as the Armenian interpreter informed me, by one of the most impassioned and love-sick dilettantes of the east; no strain I ever heard was half so lugubrious, not even that of a dog baying the moon, or owls making their complaints to it.

I could not help telling the ambassador, without the smallest circumlocution, that his tabor and pipe people I heard the other day accompanying a dulcimer, were far more worthy of praise than his vocal attendants; but this truth, like most others, did not exactly please; and I fear my reputation for musical connoisseurship was completely forfeited in his excellency's estimation, for he looked a little glum upon the occasion. What surprised me most, after all, was the patience with which the whole assembly listened for full three-quarters of an hour to these languorous wailings.

Amongst the audience, none bore the severe infliction with a greater degree of evangelical resignation than the grand inquisitor and the archbishop of Toledo; both these prelates have not only the look, but the character of beneficence, which promises a truce to the faggot

and pitch-barrel; the expression of the archbishop's countenance in particular is most engagingly mild and pleasing. He came up to me without the least reserve or formality, and taking me by the hand, said with a cheerful smile, "I see you are equipped for a dance, and have adopted our fashion; we all long to judge whether an Englishman can enter (as I hear you can) into the extravagant spirit of our national dances. I will speak to Pacheco, and desire him to form a diversion in your favour, by calling off these doleful minstrels to the rinfresco prepared for them." And so he did, and there was an end of the concert, to my infinite joy, and the no less delight of the villa mayors and sabbatinis, with whom, without a moment's farther delay, I sprang forth in a bolero.

Down came all the Spanish musicians from their formal orchestra, too happy to escape its trammels; away went the foreign regulars, taking vehement pinches of snuff, with the most unequivocal expressions of anger and indignation. A circle was soon formed, a host of guitars put in immediate requisition, and

never did I hear such wild, extravagant, passionate modulations.

Boccharini, who led and presided over the Duchess of Ossuna's concerts, and who had been lent to Pacheco as a special favour, witnessed these most original deviations from all established musical rule with the utmost contempt and dismay. He said to me in a loud whisper, "If *you* dance and *they* play in this ridiculous manner, I shall never be able to introduce a decent style into our musical world here, which I flattered myself I was on the very point of doing. What possesses you? Is it the devil? Who could suppose that a reasonable being, an Englishman of all others, would have encouraged these inveterate barbarians in such absurdities. There's a chromatic scream! there's a passage! We have heard of robbing time; this is murdering it. What! again! Why, this is worse than a convulsive hiccup, or the last rattle in the throat of a dying malefactor. Give me the Turkish howlings in preference; they are not so obtrusive and impudent."

So saying, he moved off with a semi-seria stride, and we danced on with redoubled de-

light and joy. The quicker we moved, the more intrepidly we stamped with our feet, the more sonorously we snapped our fingers, the better reconciled the sublime Effendi appeared to be with me. He forgot my critiques upon his vocal performers: he rose up from his snug cushion, and nodded his turbaned head, and expressed his delight, not only by word and gesture, but in a most comfortable orientalish sort of chuckling. As to the rest of the company, the Spanish part at least, they were so much animated, that not less than twenty voices accompanied the bolero with its appropriate words in full chorus, and with a glow of enthusiasm that inspired my lovely partners and myself with such energy, that we outdid all our former outdancings.

"Is it possible," exclaimed an old fandango-fancier of great notoriety—"is it possible, that a son of the cold north can have learnt all our rapturous flings and stampings?"—"The French never *could*, or rather never *would*," observed a Monsieur Gaudin, one of the Duke de la V——'s secretaries, who was standing by perfectly astounded.

Who persecute like renegades? who are so virulent against their former sect as fresh converts to another? This was partly my case; though my dancing and musical education had been strictly orthodox, according to the precepts of Mozart and Sacchini, of Vestris and Gardel, I declared loudly there was no music but Spanish, no dancing but Spanish, no salvation in either art out of the Spanish pale, and that, compared with such rapturous melodies, such inspired movements, the rest of Europe afforded only examples of dullness and insipidity. I would not allow my former instructors a spark of merit; and at the very moment I was committing solecisms in good dancing at every step, and stamping and piaffing like a courser but half-broken in at a manège, I felt and looked as firmly persuaded of the truth of my impudent assertions as the greatest bigot of his nonsense in some untried new-fangled superstition. Success, founded or unfounded, is everything in this world. We too well know the sad fate of merit. I am more than apt to conjecture we were but very slightly entitled to any applause; yet the

transports we called forth were as fervid as those the famous Le Pique excited at Naples in the zenith of his popularity.

The British and American ministers, who were standing by the whole time, enjoyed this amusing proof of Spanish fanaticism, in its profane mood, with all the zest of intelligent and shrewd observers. Pisani, the Venetian ambassador, inclined decidedly to the southern side of the question. He was bound, heart and soul, by a variety of silken ties to the Spanish interest, and had almost forgotten the fascinations of Venice in those of Andalusia. Consequently I had his vote in my favour. Not so that of the Duchess of Ossuna, Boccharini's patroness. She said to me in the plainest language, "You are making the greatest fool of yourself I ever beheld; and as to those riotous self-taught hoydens, your partners, I tell you what, they are scarcely worthy to figure in the third rank at a second-rate theatre. Come along with me, and I will present you to my mother, the Countess of Benevente, who gives a very different sort of education to the charming young women she admits to her court."

I had heard of this court and its delectabi-

lities, and at the same time been informed that its throne was a faro-table, to which the initiated were imperatively expected to become tributaries. The sovereign, old Benevente, is the most determined hag of her rout-giving, card-playing species in Europe, of the highest birth, the highest consequence, and the principal disposer, by long habit and old cortejo-ship, of Florida Blanca's good graces.

Notwithstanding the severe regulations against gambling societies, most severely enforced at Madrid; notwithstanding the prime minister's morality, and the still higher morality of his royal master, this great lady's aberrations of every kind are most complaisantly winked at; she is allowed not only to set up under her own princely roof a refuge for the desolate, in the most delicate style of Spanish refinement, for the kind purpose of enchanting all persons sufficiently favoured by fortune to merit admission to her parties, by every blandishment and languishment the most seductive eyes of Seville and Cadiz she had collected together could throw around them; but so sure as the hour of midnight arrived, and Florida Blanca (who never fails paying his devoirs to the

countess every evening) had made his retiring bow, so sure a confidential party of illuminati, of unsleeping partners in the gambling-line, made their appearance, heavily laden with well-stored caskets.

Now came the tug of play, and hope, and fear in all their thrilling and throbbing alternations; but, to say truth, I was so completely jaded and worn-out that I partook of neither, and was too happy, after losing almost unconsciously a few dobras, to be allowed to retire; old Benevente calling out to me, with the croak of a vulture scenting its prey from afar, *Cavallero Inglez, a mañana a la misma hora.*

LETTER XIII.

Palace of Madrid.—Masterly productions of the great Italian, Spanish, and Flemish painters.—The King's sleeping apartment. — Musical clocks. — Feathered favourites. — Picture of the Madonna del Spasimo.—Interview with Don Gabriel and the Infanta.—Her Royal Highness's affecting recollections of home.—Head-quarters of Masserano.—Exhibition of national manners there.

Monday, 24th Dec. 1787.

I SHALL have the megrims for want of exercise, like my friend Achmet Vassif, if I don't alter my way of life. This morning I only took a listless saunter in the Prado, and returned early to dinner, with a very slight provision of fresh air in my lungs. Roxas was with me, hurrying me out of all appetite that I might see the palace by daylight; and so to the palace we went, and it was luckily a bright ruddy afternoon, the sun gilding a grand confusion of mountainous clouds, and chequering the wild extent of country between Madrid

and the Escurial with powerful effects of light and shade.

I cannot praise the front of the palace very warmly. In the centre of the edifice starts up a whimsical sort of turret, with gilt bells, the vilest ornament that could possibly have been imagined. The interior court is of pure and classic architecture, and the great staircase so spacious and well-contrived that you arrive almost imperceptibly at the portal of the guard-chamber. Every door-case and window recess of this magnificent edifice gleams with the richest polished marbles: the immense and fortress-like thickness of the walls, and double panes of the strongest glass, exclude the keen blasts which range almost uninterrupted over the wide plains of Castile, and preserve an admirable temperature throughout the whole extent of these royal rooms, the grandeur, and at the same time comfort, of which cannot possibly be exceeded.

The king, the prince of Asturias, and the chief part of their attendants, were all absent hunting in the park of the Escurial; but the reposteros, or curtain-drawers of the palace, having received particular orders for my admit-

tance, I enjoyed the entire liberty of wandering about unrestrained and unmolested. Roxas having left me to join a gay party of the royal body-guard in Masserano's apartments, I remained in total solitude, surrounded by the pure unsullied works of the great Italian, Spanish, and Flemish painters, fresh as the flowers of a parterre in early morning, and many of them as beautiful in point of hues.

Not a door being closed, I penetrated through the chamber of the throne even into the old king's sleeping-apartment, which, unlike the dormitory of most of his subjects, is remarkable for extreme neatness. A book of pious orisons, with engravings by Spanish artists, and containing, amongst other prayers in different languages, one adapted to the exclusive use of majesty, *Regi solo proprius*, was lying on his praying-desk; and at the head of the richly-canopied, but uncurtained bed, I noticed with much delight an enamelled tablet by Mengs, representing the infant Saviour appearing to Saint Anthony of Padua.

In this room, as in all the others I passed through, without any exception, stood cages of gilded wire, of different forms and sizes,

and in every cage a curious exotic bird, in full song, each trying to out-sing his neighbour. Mingled with these warblings was heard at certain intervals the low chime of musical clocks, stealing upon the ear like the tones of harmonic glasses. No other sound broke in any degree the general stillness, except, indeed, the almost inaudible footsteps of several aged domestics, in court-dresses of the cut and fashion prevalent in the days of the king's mother, Elizabeth Farnese, gliding along quietly and cautiously to open the cages, and offer their inmates such dainties as highly-educated birds are taught to relish. Much fluttering and cowering down ensued in consequence of these attentions, and much rubbing of bills and scratching of poles on my part, as well as on that of the smiling old gentlemen.

As soon as the ceremony of pampering these feathered favourites had been most affectionately performed, I availed myself of the light reflected from a clear sun-set to examine the pictures, chiefly of a religious cast, with which these stately apartments are tapestried; particularly the Madonna del Spasimo, that vivid representation of the blessed Virgin's maternal

agony, when her divine son, fainting under the burthen of the cross, approached to ascend the mount of torture, and complete the awful mystery of redemption. Raphael never attained in any other of his works such solemn depth of colour, such majesty of character, as in this triumph of his art. "Never was sorrow like unto the sorrow" he has depicted in the Virgin's countenance and attitude; never was the expression of a sublime and God-like calm in the midst of acute suffering conveyed more closely home to the human heart than in the face of Christ.

I stood fixed in the contemplation of this holy vision—for such I almost fancied it to be—till the approaching shadows of night had overspread every recess of these vast apartments: still I kept intensely gazing upon the picture. I knew it was time to retire,—still I gazed on. I was aware that Roxas had been long expecting me in Masserano's apartments,—still I could not snatch myself away; the Virgin mother with her outstretched arms still haunted me. The song of the birds had ceased, as well as the soft diapason of the self-playing organs;—all was hushed, all tranquil. I departed at length with the languid unwillingness

of an enthusiast exhausted by the intensity of his feelings and loth to arouse himself from the bosom of grateful illusions.

Just as I reached the portal of the great stairs, whom should I meet but Noronha advancing towards me with a hurried step. "Where are you going so fast?" said he to me, "and where have you been staying so long? I have been sending repeatedly after you to no purpose; you must come with me immediately to the Infanta and Don Gabriel, they want to ask you a thousand questions about the Ajuda: the letters you brought them from Marialva, and the archbishop in particular, have, I suppose, inspired that wish; and as royal wishes, you know, cannot be too speedily gratified, you must kiss their hands this very evening. I am to be your introductor."—"What!" said I, "in this unceremonious dress?"—"Yes," said the ambassador, "I have heard that you are not a pattern of correctness in these matters." I wished to have been one in this instance. At this particular moment I was in no trim exteriorly or interiorly for courtly introductions. I thought of nothing but birds and madonnas, and had much rather have been presented to

a cockatoo than to the greatest monarch in Christendom.

However, I put on the best face I was able, and we proceeded together very placidly to that part of the palace assigned to Don Gabriel and his blooming bride. The doors of a coved ante-chamber flew open, and after passing through an enfilade of saloons peopled with ladies-in-waiting and pages, (some mere children,) we entered a lofty chamber hung with white satin, formed into compartments by a rich embroidery of gold and colours, and illuminated by a lustre of rock crystal.

At the farther extremity of the apartment, stood the Infant Don Gabriel, leaning against a table covered with velvet, on which I observed a case of large golden antique medals he was in the very act of contemplating: the Infanta was seated near. She rose up most graciously to hold out a beautiful hand, which I kissed with unfeigned fervour: her countenance is most prepossessing; the same florid complexion, handsome features, and open exhilarating smile which distinguishes her brother the Prince of Brazil.

"Ah," said her royal highness with great

earnestness, "you have then lately seen my dear mother, and walked perhaps in the little garden I was so fond of; did you notice the fine flowers that grow there? particularly the blue carnation; we have not such flowers at Madrid; this climate is not like that of Portugal, nor are our views so pleasant; I miss the azure Tagus, and your ships continually sailing up it; but when you write to your friend Marialva and the archbishop, tell them, I possess what no other prospect upon earth can equal, the smiles of an adored husband."

The Infant now approached towards me with a look of courteous benignity that reminded me strongly of the Bourbons, nor could I trace in his frank kindly manner the least leaven of Austrian hauteur or Spanish starchness. After inquiring somewhat facetiously how the Duke d'Alafoens and the Portuguese academicians proceeded on their road to the temple of fame, he asked me whether our universities continued to be the favoured abode of classical attainments, and if the books they printed were as correct and as handsome now as in the days of the Stuarts; adding that his private collection contained some copies which had formerly belonged to the celebrated Count of Oxford.

This was far too good an opportunity of putting in a word to the praise and glory of his own famous translation of Sallust, to be neglected; so I expressed everything he could have wished to hear upon the subject.

"You are very good," observed his royal highness; "but to tell you the truth, it was hard work for me. I began it, and so I went on, and lost many a day's wholesome exercise in our parks and forests: however, such as it is, I performed my task without any assistance, though you may perhaps have heard the contrary."

It was now Noronha's turn to begin complimenting, which he did with all the high court mellifluence of an accredited family ambassador: whether, indeed, the Infant received as gospel all the fine things that were said to him I won't answer, but he looked even kinder and more gracious than at our first entrance. The Infanta recurred again and again to the subject of the Ajuda, and appeared so visibly affected that she awakened all my sympathies; for I, too, had left those behind me on the banks of the Tagus for whom I felt a fond and indelible regard. As we were making our retiring bows, I saw tears gathering in her eyes, whilst she

kept gracefully waving her hand to bid us a happy night.

The impressions I received from this interview were not of a nature to allow my enjoying with much vivaciousness the next scene to which I was transported—the head-quarters of Masserano, whom I found in unusually high spirits surrounded by a train of gay young officers, rapping out the rankest Castilian oaths, quaffing their flowing cups of champagne and val de peñas, and playing off upon each other, not exactly the most decorous specimens of practical wit.

Roxas looked rather abashed at so unrefined an exhibition of national manners: Noronha had taken good care to keep aloof, and I regretted not having followed his example.

LETTER XIV.

A German Visionary.—Remarkable conversation with him. —History of a Ghost-seer.

It is not at every corner of life that we stumble upon an intrinsically singular character: to-day however, at Noronha's, I fell in with a Saxon count,* who justly answers to that description. This man is not only thoroughly imbued with the theoretical mysticism of the German school, but has most firmly persuaded himself, and hundreds besides, that he holds converse with the souls of the departed. Though most impressive and even extravagant upon this subject, when started, he proves himself a man of singular

* He resided afterwards at Paris in a diplomatic character, and is supposed to have been implicated in some of the least amiable events of the revolution. A mysterious passage in the first volume of Soulavie's Memoirs is said to refer to him. He was particularly intimate with citizen Egalité.

judgment upon most others, is a good geometrician, an able chymist, a mineralogist of no ordinary proficiency, and has made discoveries in the art of smelting metals, which have been turned already to useful purpose. Yet nothing can beat out of this cool reflective head, that magical operations may be performed to evident effect, and the devil most positively evocated.

I thought, at first sight, there was a something uncouth and ghostly in his appearance, that promised strange communications; he has a careworn look, a countenance often convulsed with apparently painful twitches, and a lofty skull, set off with bristling hair, powdered as white as Caucasus.

Notwithstanding I by no means courted his acquaintance, he was resolved to make up to me, and dissipate by the smoothest address he could assume, any prejudices his uncommon cast of features might have inspired. Drawing his chair close to mine, whilst Noronha and his party were busily engaged at voltarete, he tried to allure my attention by throwing out hints of the wonders within reach of a person born under the smile of certain con-

stellations: that I was the person he meant to insinuate, I have little doubt. Having heard that fortune had conferred upon me some few of her golden gifts, he thought, perhaps, that I might be *fused* to advantage, like any other lump of the precious metals. Be his motives what they may, he certainly took as many pains to wind himself into my good opinion as if I had actually been the prime favourite of a planet, or a distant cousin by some diabolical intermarriage, in the style of one of the Plantagenet matches, of old Beelzebub himself.

After a good deal of conversation upon different subjects, chiefly of a sombrous nature, happening to ask him if he had known Schröffer, the most renowned ghost-seer in all Germany,—"Intimately well," was his reply; "a bold young man, not so free, alas! from sensual taint as the awful career he had engaged in demanded,—he rushed upon danger unprepared, at an unhallowed moment — his fate was terrible. I passed a week with him not six months before he disappeared in the frightful manner you have heard of; it was a week of mental toil and suffering, of fasts

and privations of various natures, and of sights sufficiently appalling to drive back the whole current of the blood from the heart. It was at this period that, returning one dark and stormy night from trying experiments upon living animals, more excruciating than any the keenest anatomist ever perpetrated, I found lying upon my chair, coiled up in a circle like the symbol of eternity, an enormous snake of a deadly lead colour; it neither hissed nor moved for several minutes: during this pause, whilst I remained aghast looking full upon it, a voice more like the whisper of trees than any sound of human utterance, articulated certain words, which I have retained, and used to powerful effect in moments of peril and extreme urgency."

I shall not easily forget the strange inquisitive look he gave me whilst making this still stranger communication; he saw my curiosity was excited, and flattered himself he had made upon me the impression he meditated; but when I asked, with the tone of careless levity, what became of the snake on the cushion, after the voice had ceased, he shook his white locks somewhat angrily, and croaked forth with

a formidable German accent, "Ask no more—ask no more—you are not in a disposition at present sufficiently pure and serious to comprehend what I *might* disclose. Ask no more." —For this time at least I most implicitly obeyed him.

Promising to call upon me and continue our conversation any day or hour I might choose to appoint, he glided off so imperceptibly, that had I been a little more persuaded of the possibility of supernatural occurrences, I might have believed he had actually vanished. "A good riddance," said Noronha; "I don't half like that man, nor can I make out why Florida Blanca is so gracious to him." —"I rather suspect he is a spy upon us all," observed the Sardinian ambassadress, who made one of the voltarete party; "and though he guessed right about the winning card last night at the Countess of Benevente's, I am determined not to invite him to dinner again in a hurry."

LETTER XV.

Madame Bendicho.—Unsuccessful search on the Prado.—Kauffman, an infidel in the German style.—Mass in the chapel of the Virgin.—The Duchess of Alba's villa.—Destruction by a young French artist of the paintings of Rubens.—French ambassador's ball.—Heir-apparent of the house of Medina Celi.

Sunday, Jan. 13th.

KAUFFMAN* accompanied me to the Prado this morning, where we met Madame Bendicho and her faithful Expilly, (a famous tactician in war or peace,) who told me that somebody I thought particularly interesting was not far off. This intelligence imparted to me such animation, that Kauffman was obliged to take long strides to equal my pace. I traversed the whole Prado without meeting the object of my pursuit, and found myself almost unconsciously in the court before the ugly front of the church of Atocha. A tide of devotees carried us into

* A nephew of the famous Angelica, and no indifferent painter himself.

the chapel of the Virgin, which is hung round with trophies, and ex-voto's, legs, arms, and fingers, in wax and plaster.

Kauffman is three parts an infidel in the German style, but I advised him to kneel with something like Castilian solemnity, and hear out a mass which was none of the shortest, the priest being old, and much given to the wiping and adjusting of spectacles, a pair of which, uncommonly large and lustrous, I thought he would never have succeeded in fitting to his nose.

We happened to kneel under the shade of some banners which the British lion was simple enough to let slip out of his paws during the last war. The colours of fort St. Philip dangled immediately above my head. Amongst the crowd of Our Lady's worshippers I espied one of the gayest of my ball-room acquaintances, the young Duke of Arion, looking like a strayed sheep, and smiting his breast most piteously.

A tiresome salve regina being ended, I measured back my steps to the Prado, and at length discovered the person of all others I wished most to see, strictly guarded by mamma.

I accompanied them to their door, and returned loiteringly and lingeringly home, where I found Infantado, who had been waiting for me above half an hour. With him I rode out on the Toledo road to see a pompous bridge, or rather viaduct; for the river it spans, even in this season, is scarcely copious enough to turn the model of a mill-wheel, much less the reality.

From this spot we went to a villa lately purchased by the Duchess of Alba, and which, I was told, Rubens had once inhabited. True enough, we found a conceited young French artist in the arabesque and cupid line, busily employed in pouncing out the last memorials in this spot of that great painter; reminiscences of favourite pictures he had thrown off in fresco, upon what appeared a rich crimson damask ground. Yes, I witnessed this vandalish operation, and saw large flakes of stucco imprinted with the touches of Rubens fall upon the floor, and heard the wretch who was perpetrating the irreparable act sing, " Veillons mes soeurs, veillons encorrre," with a strong Parisian accent, all the while he was slashing away.

My sweet temper was so much ruffled by this spectacle, that I begged to be excused any

further excursion, and returned home to dres and compose myself, while Infantado went back to his palace. I soon joined him, having been invited to dine with his right virtuous and estimable papa. Thank heaven the rage for frenchified decoration has not yet reached this plain but princely abode, which remains in noble Castilian simplicity, with all its famed pictures untouched and uncontaminated.

As soon as the old duke had retired to his evening's devotions, we hurried to the French ambassador's ball, where I met fewer saints than sinners, and saw nothing particularly edifying, except the semi-royal race of the Medina Celis dancing "high and disposedly." Cogolhudo, the heir-apparent of this great house, is a good-natured, busy personage, but his illustrious consort, who has been recently appointed to the important office of Camerara mayor, or mistress of the robes to the image of Our Lady of La Soledad, is a great deal less kindly and affable.*

* I have seen a beautiful portrait, engraved by Selma, of this image, and dedicated in due form to its first lady of the dressing-room, Marchioness of Cogolhudo, Duchess of Sant Estévan, &c.

LETTER XVI.

Visit from the Turkish Ambassador. — Stroll to the gardens of the Buen Retiro.—Troop of ostriches.—Madame d'Aranda.—State of Cortejo-ism.—Powers of drapery.—Madame d'Aranda's toilet.—Assembly at the house of Madame Badaan.—Cortejos off duty.—Blaze of beauty.—A curious group.—A dance.

Sunday, 23rd.

EVERY morning I have the pleasure of supplying the Grand Signior's representative with rolls and brioche, baked at home for my breakfast; and this very day he came himself in one of the king's lumbering state coaches, with some of his special favourites, to thank me for these piping hot attentions. We had a great deal of conversation about the marvels of London, though he seemed stoutly convinced that in every respect Islembul exceeded it ten times over.

As soon as he moved off, I strolled to the

gardens of the Buen Retiro, which contains neither statues nor fountains worth describing. They cover a vast extent of sandy ground, in which there is no prevailing upon anything vegetable or animal to thrive, except ostriches, a troop of which were striding about in high spirits, apparently as much at home as in their own native parched-up deserts.

Roxas dined with us, and we went together in the evening to the French ambassador's, the Duke de la V * * * *. His daughter, a fine young woman of eighteen or nineteen, is married to the Prince de L * * * *, a smart stripling, who has scarcely entered his fifteenth year; the ambassador is no trifling proficient in political intrigue, no common-place twister and turner in the paths of diplomacy, looks about him with calm and polished indifference, though full of hazardous schemes and projects; ever in secret ferment, and a Jesuit to the heart's core. I could not help noticing his quiet, observing eye—the still eye of a serpent lying perdue in a cave. In his address and manners he is quite a model of high-bred ease, without the slightest tincture of pedantry or affectation.

Madame la Duchesse is a great deal fonder of fine phrases, which she does not always reserve for grand occasions. Their son, the Prince de C * * *, amused me beyond bounds with his lightning-like flashes of wit and merriment, at the expense of Madrid and its tertullias. Upon the whole, I like this family very much, and ardently wish they may like me.

I could not stay with them so long as I desired, Roxas having promised to present me to Madame d'Aranda, whose devoted friend and *cortejo* he has the consummate pleasure to be. Happy the man who has the good fortune of being attached by such delicious, though not quite strictly sacred ties, to so charming a little creature; but in general the state of cortejo-ism is far from enviable. You are the sworn victim of all the lady's caprices, and can never move out of the rustle of her black silk petticoats, or beyond the wave of her fan, without especial permission, less frequently granted with complacence than refused with asperity. I imagine she has very good-naturedly given him leave of absence to show me about this royal village, or else I should

think he would hardly venture to spare me so much of his company.

We found her sitting *en famille* with her sister, and two young boys her brothers, over a silver brazier in a snug interior apartment hung with a bright valencia satin. She showed me the most pleasing marks of civility and attention, and ordered her own apartments to be lighted up, that I might see its magnificent furniture to advantage. The bed, of the richest blue velvet trimmed with point lace, is beautifully shaped, and placed in a spacious and deep recess hung round with an immense profusion of ample curtains.

I wonder architects and fitters up of apartments do not avail themselves more frequently of the powers of drapery. Nothing produces so grand and at the same time so comfortable an effect. The moment I have an opportunity I will set about constructing a tabernacle, larger than the one I arranged at Ramalhaô, and indulge myself in every variety of plait and fold that can possibly be invented.

Madame d'Aranda's toilet, designed by Moite the sculptor and executed by Auguste, is by far the most exquisite *chef-d'œuvre* of the

kind I ever saw. Poor thing! she has every exterior delight the pomps and vanities of the world can give; but she is married to a man old enough to be her grandfather, and looks as pale and drooping as a narcissus or lily of the valley would appear if stuck in Abraham's bosom, and continually breathed upon by that venerable patriarch.

After passing a delightful hour in what appeared to me an ethereal sort of fairy-land, we went to a far more earthly abode, that of a Madame Badaan, who is so obliging as to give immense assemblies once or twice a week, in rather confined apartments. This small, but convenient habitation, is no idle or unimportant resort for cortejos off duty, or in search of novel adventures. Several of these disbanded worthies were lounging about in the mean time, quite lackadaisically. There was a blaze of beauty in every corner of the room, sufficient to enchant those the least given to being enchanted; and there frisked the two little Sabatinis, half spanish, half italian, sporting their neatly turned ankles; and there sat Madame de Villamayor in all her pride, and her daughters so full of promise; and the Marchio-

ness of Santa Cruz, with her dark hair and blue eyes, in all her loveliness. How delighted my friend, the Effendi, must have been upon entering such a paradise, which he soon did after we arrived there, followed by his Armenian interpreter, whom I like better than the Greek, Timoni, with his prying, squirrelish look, and malicious propensities.

The ambassador found me out almost immediately, and taking me to an angle of the apartment, where a well-cushioned divan had been prepared for his lollification, made me sit down by him whether I would or not. We were just settled, when a bevy of young tits dressed out in a fantastic, blowzy style, with sparkling eyes and streaming ribbons, drew their chairs round us, and began talking a strange lingua-franca, composed of three or four different languages. We must have formed a curious group; I was declaiming and gesticulating with all my might, reciting scraps of Hafiz and Mesihi, whilst the ladies, none of the tallest, who were seated on low chairs, kept perking up their pretty little inquisitive faces in the very beard of the stately Moslem, whose so-

lemn demeanour formed an amusing contrast to their giddy vivacity.

Madame Badaan and her spouse, the very best people in the world, and the readiest to afford their company all possible varieties of accommodation, sent for the most famous band of musicians Madrid could boast of, and proposed a dance for the entertainment of his bearded excellency. Accordingly, thirteen or fourteen couples started, and boleroed and fandangoed away upon a thick carpet for an hour or two, without intermission. There are scarcely any boarded floors in Madrid, so the custom of dancing upon rugs is universally established.

LETTER XVII.

Valley of Aranjuez.—The island garden.—The palace.—Strange medley of pictures.—Oratories of the King and the Queen.—Destruction of a grand apartment painted in fresco by Mengs.—Boundless freedom of conduct in the present reign.—Decoration of the Duchess of Ossuna's house.—Apathy pervading the whole Iberian peninsula.

Tuesday, December 1st, 1795.

IT was on a clear bright morning (scarce any frost) that we left a wretched place called Villatoba, falling into ruins like almost all the towns and villages I have seen in Spain. The sky was so transparent, so pearly, and the sunbeams so fresh and reviving, that the country appeared pleasant in spite of its flatness and aridity. Every tree has been cut down, and all chance of their being replaced precluded by the wandering flocks of sheep, goats and swine, which rout, and grout, and nibble uncontrolled and unmolested.

At length, after a tedious drive through vast tracts of desolate country, scarce a house, scarce a shrub, scarce a human being to meet with, we descended a rapid declivity, and I once more found myself in the valley of Aranjuez. The avenues of poplar and plane have shot up to a striking elevation since I saw them last. The planes on the banks of the Tagus incline most respectfully towards its waters; they are vigorously luxuriant, although planted only seven years ago, as the gardener informed me.

Charles the Fifth's elms in the island-garden close to the palace are decaying apace. I visited the nine venerable stumps close to a hideous brick-ruin; the largest measures forty or fifty feet in girth; the roots are picturesquely fantastic. The fountains, like the shades in which they are embowered, are rapidly going to decay: the bronze Venus, at the fountain which takes its name from Don John of Austria, has lost her arm.

Notwithstanding the dreariness of the season with all its accompaniment of dry leaves and faded herbage, this historic garden had still charms; the air was mild, and the sunbeams

played on the Tagus, and many a bird flitted from spray to spray. Several long alleys of the loftiest elms, their huge rough trunks mantled with ivy, and their grotesque roots advancing and receding like grotto-work into the walk, struck me as singularly pleasing.

The palace has not been long completed; the additions made by Charles the Third agree not ill with the original edifice. It is a comfortable, though not a magnificent abode; walls thick, windows cheerfully glazed in two panels, neat low chimney-pieces in many of the apartments; few traces of the days of the Philips; scarce any furniture that bespeak an ancient family. A flimsy modern style, half Italian, half French, prevails. Even the pictures are, in point of subjects, preservation, originality, and masters, as strangely jumbled together as in the dominions of an auctioneer. This may be accounted for by their being collected indiscriminately by the present King, whilst prince of Asturias. Amongst innumerable trash, I noticed a Crucifixion by Mengs; not overburthened with expression, but finely coloured; the back-ground and sky

most gloomily portentous, and producing a grand effect of light and shade. The interior of a gothic church, by Peter Neef, so fine, so clear, so silvery in point of tint, as to reconcile me, (for the moment, at least,) to this harsh, stiff master; the figures exquisite, the preservation perfect; no varnish, no retouches.

A set of twelve small cabinet pictures, touched with admirable spirit by Teniers, the subjects taken from the Gierusalemme Liberata, treated as familiarly as if the boozy painter had been still copying his pot-companions. Armida's palace is a little round summer-house; she herself, habited like a burgher's frouw in her holiday garments, holds a Nuremberg-shaped looking-glass up to the broad vulgar face of a boorish Rinaldo. The fair Naiads, comfortably fat, and most invitingly smirkish, are naked to be sure, but a pile of furbelowed garments and farthingales is ostentatiously displayed on the bank of the water; close by a small table covered with a neat white tablecloth, and garnished with silver tankards, cold pie, and salvers of custard and jellies. All these vulgar accessories are finished with scrupulous delicacy.

Several oratories open into the royal apart-

ments. One set apart for the queen is adorned with a very costly, and at the same time beautiful altar, rich, simple, and majestic; not an ornament is lavished in vain. Two corinthian columns of a most beautiful purple and white marble, sustain a pediment, as highly polished and as richly mottled as any agate I ever beheld; the capitals are bronze splendidly gilt, so is the foliage of the consoles supporting the slab which forms the altar. The design, the materials, the workmanship, are all Spanish, and do the nation credit.

The king's oratory is much larger, and not ill-designed; the proportion is good, about twenty-six by twenty-two, and twenty-four high, besides a solemn recess for the altar. The walls entirely covered with fresco-painting; saints, prophets, clouds, and angels, in grand confusion. The sides of the arch, and all the frame of the altar-piece, are profusely and solidly gilt. A plinth of jasper, and a skirting about three feet high, of a light-grey marble, streaked with black, not unlike the capricious ramifications on mocho-stones, and polished as a mirror, is continued round the room, so that nothing meets the eye but the rich gleam of

gold, painting, and marble, all blended together in one glowing tint. The pavement, too, of different Spanish marbles, is a *chef-d'œuvre* of workmanship. I particularly admired the soft ivory-hue of the white marble, but my conductor allowed it little merit when compared with that of Italy: I think him mistaken in this remark, and heartily wish him so in many others.

This conductor, an old snuffling domestic of the late king, was rather forward in making his remarks upon times present. A sort of Piedmontese in my train, I believe the master of the fonda where I lodge, pointing to a *manege* now building, asked for whom it was designed, the king or the Duke d'Alcudia? "For both, no doubt, was the answer; what serves one serves the other." In the royal tribune, I was informed, with a woful shrug, that the king, thank God! continued to be exact and fervent in his devotions; never missing mass a single day, and frequently spending considerable time in mental prayer; but that the queen was scandalously remiss, and seldom appeared in the chapels, except when some slender re-

mains of etiquette render her presence indispensable.

The chapel, repaired after designs of Sabbatini, an old Italian architect, much in favour with Charles the Third, has merit, and is remarkable for the just distribution of light, which produces a solemn religious effect. The three altars are noble, and their paintings good. One in particular, on the right, dedicated to St. Anthony, immediately attracted my attention by the effulgence of glory amidst which the infant Jesus is descending to caress the kneeling saint, whose attitude, and youthful, enthusiastic countenance, have great expression. The colouring is warm and harmonious; Maella is the painter.

I inquired after a remarkable room in this palace, called in the plan *Salon de los Funciones*, and vulgarly *el Coliseo*. The ceiling was painted by Mengs, and esteemed one of his capital works: here Ferdinand and Barbara, the most musical of sovereigns, used to melt in ecstasies at the soft warblings of Farinelli and Egiziello—but, alas! the scene of their amusements, like themselves and their

warblers, is no more. Not later than last summer, this grand theatrical apartment was divided into a suite of shabby, bandboxical rooms for the accommodation of the Infant of Parma. No mercy was shown to the beautiful roof. In some places, legs and folds of drapery are still visible; but the workmen are hammering and plastering at a great rate, and in a few days whitewash will cover all.

Coming out of the palace, and observing how deserted and melancholy the walks, garden, and avenues appeared, I was told, that in a few weeks a total change would take place, for the court was expected on the 6th of January, to remain six months, and that every pleasure followed in its train. Shoals of gamblers, and ladies of easy virtue of all ranks, ages, and descriptions. Every barrier which Charles the Third, of chaste and pious memory, attempted to oppose to the wanton inclinations of his subjects, has been broken down in the present reign; boundless freedom of conduct prevails, and the most disgusting debauchery riots in these lovely groves, which deserve to be set apart for elegant and rural pleasures.

In my walks I passed a huge edifice lately built for the favourite Alcudia. Common report accuses it of being more magnificently furnished than the royal residence; but as I did not enter it, I shall content myself with noting down, that it boasts nineteen windows in front, and a plain Tuscan portal with handsome granite pillars. Adjoining is a house belonging to the duchess of Ossuna, full of workmen, painters and stuccadors: a goggle-eyed Milanese, most fiercely conceited, is daubing the walls with all his might and main. He is an architect too, at least I have his word for it, and claims the merit, a great one as he believes, of having designed a sort of ball-room, with many a festoon and Bohemian glass-chandelier and coarse arabesque. The floor is bricked, upon which thick mats or carpets are spread when dancing is going forward.

I was in hopes this tiresome custom of thumping mats and rugs with the feet, to the brisk airs of boleros and fandangos, was exploded. No music is more inspiring than the Spanish; what a pity they refuse themselves the joy of rising a foot or two into the air at every step, by the help of elastic boards.

Next to this sort of a ball-room is a sort of an oval boudoir, and then a sort of an octagon; all bad sorts of their kind. This confounded painter is covering the oval with landscapes, not half so harmonious or spirited as those which figure on Birmingham snuff-boxes or tea-boards. He has a terrible partiality to blues and greens of the crudest tints. Such colours affect my eyes as disagreeably as certain sounds my teeth, when set on edge. I pity the duchess of Ossuna, whose liberal desire of encouraging the arts deserves better artists. In music she has been more fortunate: Boccharini directed her band when I was last at Madrid; and I remember with what transport she heard and applauded the Galli, to whom she sent one morning a present of the most expensive trinkets, carelessly heaped up upon a magnificent salver of massive silver, two or three feet in diameter.

The day closed as I was wandering about the duchess's mansion, surprised at the slovenly neglect of the furniture, not an article of which has been moved out of the reach of dust, scaffoldings, the exhalations of paint, and the still more pestilential exhalation of gar-

lick-eating workmen. Universal apathy and indifference to everything seems to pervade the whole Iberian peninsula. If not caring what you eat or what you drink is a virtue, so far the evangelical precept is obeyed. So it is in Portugal, and so it is in Spain, and so it looks likely to be world without end: to which, let the rest of Europe say amen; for were these countries to open their long-closed eyes, cast off their trammels, and rouse themselves to industry, they would soon surpass their neighbours in wealth and population.

LETTER XVIII.

Explore the extremities of the Calle de la Reyna.—Destructive rage for improvement.—Loveliness of the valley of Aranjuez.—Undisturbed happiness of the animals there.—Degeneration of the race of grandees.—A royal cook.

Wednesday, Dec. 2nd, 1795.

It was near eleven before a thick fog, which had arisen from the groves and waters of Aranjuez, dispersed. I took advantage of a bright sunshine to issue forth on horseback, and explore the extremities of the Calle de la Reyna. Most of the ancient elms which compose this noble avenue, are dead-topped, many have lost their flourishing heads since I was last here, but on every side innumerable plantations of oak, elm, poplar, and plane, are springing up in all the vigour and luxuriance of youth. I was sorry to see many, very many acres of unmean-

ing shrubbery, serpentine walks, and clumps of paltry flowers, encroaching upon the wild thickets upon the banks of the Tagus.

The king, the queen, the favourite, are bitten by the rage of what they fancy to be improvement, and are levelling ground, and smoothing banks, and building rock-work, with pagodas and chinese-railing. The laburnums, weeping-willows, and flowering shrubs, which I admired so much seven years ago in all their native luxuriance, are beginning to be trimmed and tortured into what the gardener calls genteel shapes. Even the course of the Tagus has been thwarted, and part of its waters diverted into a broad ditch in order to form an island; flat, swampy, and dotted over with exotic shrubs, to make room for which many a venerable arbele and poplar has been laid low.

Hard by stands a large brick mansion, just erected, in the dullest and commonest Spanish taste, very improperly called Casa del Labrador. It has nothing rural about it, not even a hen-roost or a hog-sty; but the kitchen is snug and commodious, and to this his catholic majesty often resorts, and cooks with his own

royal hands, and for his own royal self, creadillas, (alias lamb's fry,) garlick-omelets, and other savoury messes, in the national style.

Nothing delights the good-natured monarch so much as a pretence for descending into low life, and creeping out of the sight of his court, his council, and his people; therefore, Madrid is almost totally abandoned by him, and many capricious buildings are starting up in every secluded corner of the royal parks and gardens. This last is the ugliest and most unmeaning of all. I recollect being pleased with the casinos he built whilst prince of Asturias, at the Escurial and the Pardo. His present advisers, in matters of taste, are inferior even to those who direct his political movements; and the workmen, who obey the first, still more unskilful and bungling than the generals, admirals, and engineers, who carry the plans of the latter into execution.

If they would but let Aranjuez alone, I should not care. Nature has lavished her charms most bountifully on this valley; the wild hills which close it in, though barren, are picturesquely-shaped; the Tagus here winds along in the boldest manner, overhung by

crooked willows and lofty arbeles; now losing itself in almost impervious thickets, now undermining steep banks, laying rocks bare, and forming irregular coves and recesses; now flowing smoothly through vast tracts of low shrubs, aspens, and tamarisks; in one spot edged by the most delicate greensward, in another by beds of mint and a thousand other fragrant herbs. I saw numerous herds of deer bounding along in full enjoyment of pasture and liberty; droves of horses, many of a soft cream-colour, were frisking about under some gigantic alders; and I counted one hundred and eighty cows, of a most remarkable size, in a green meadow, ruminating in peace and plenty.

The animal creation at Aranjuez seem, undoubtedly, to enjoy all the blessings of an excellent government. The breed is peculiarly attended to, and no pains or expense spared, to procure the finest bulls from every quarter. Cows more beautifully dappled, more comfortably sleek, I never beheld.

If the race of grandees could, by judicious crossing, be sustained as successfully, Spain would not have to lament her present scurvy,

ill-favoured generation of nobility. Should they be suffered to dwindle much longer, and accumulate estates and diseases by eternal intermarriages in the same family, I expect to see them on all-fours before the next century is much advanced in its course. These little men, however, are not without some sparks of a lofty, resolute spirit; very few, indeed, have bowed the knee to the Baal of the present hour, to the image which the king has set up. A train of eager, hungry dependants, picked out of inferior and foreign classes, form the company of the duke of Alcudia. Notwithstanding his lofty titles, unbounded wealth, solid power, and dazzling magnificence, he is treated by the first class with silent contempt and passive indifference. They read the tale of his illustrious descent with the same sneering incredulity, as the patents and decrees which enumerate the services he has done the state. Few instances, perhaps, are upon record, of a more steady, persevering contempt of an object in actual power, stamped with every ornament royal favour can devise to give it credit, value, and currency.

A thousand interesting reflections arising

from this subject crowded my mind as I rode home through the stately and now deserted alleys of Aranjuez. The weather was growing chill, and the withered leaves began to rustle. I was glad to take refuge by a blazing fire. Money, which procures almost everything, had not failed to seduce the best salads and apples from the royal gardens, admirable butter and good game; so I feasted royally, though I dare say I should have done more so, in the most extensive sense of the word, could some supernatural power or frenchified revolution have procured me the royal cook. His majesty, I am assured, by those I am far from suspecting of flattery, has real talents for this most useful profession.

The comfortable listlessness which had crept over me was too pleasant to be shaken off, and I remained snug by my fireside the whole evening.

THE END.

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